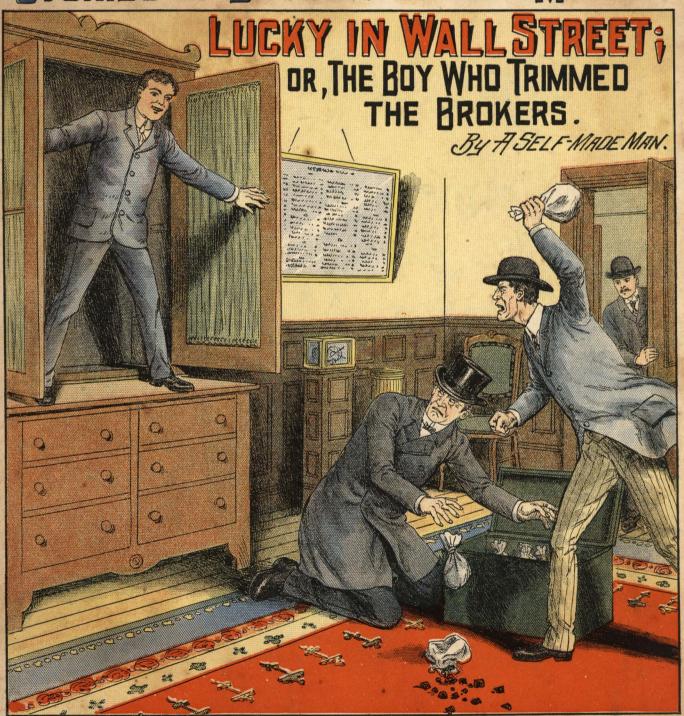
## Nº 148. FAME 5 (ents.

# IRTUNE WEEKLY

OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY.



As the pair of rascally brokers uttered exclamations of rage at the discovery that the bags contained coal instead of golden nuggets, Bob Carson banged open the doors of the bookcase and confronted them with a grin on his face.

## Fame and Fortune Weekly

### STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY

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## LUCKY IN WALL STREET

OR,

## THE BOY WHO TRIMMED THE BROKERS

#### By A SELF-MADE MAN

#### CHAPTER I.

BOB CARSON'S DEBUT IN WALL STREET.

"Is Mr. Littleby in?" asked a well-dressed, bright-looking boy who had just stepped into the waiting-room of Littleby & Mallison, stock brokers, No. — Wall Street.

"Yes," replied a dapper young man, with a pen behind his ear and a bunch of papers in his hand, eyeing the boy sharply.

"I should like to see him," replied the boy.

"Who are you from?" asked the clerk.

"From nobody. I was told that this firm needed a messenger, so—"

"Who told you we needed a messenger?" asked the young man, brusquely.

"Mr. Wade, cashier of Boothby & Co."

"And you have come after the position, eh?"

"T have

"I don't know whether Mr. Littleby or Mr. Mallison has hired a boy or not. I'll tell Mr. Littleby that you are here looking for the position. What's your name?"

"Bob Carson."

"Wait till I come back."

The clerk, whose name was Walter Titus, disappeared into Mr. Littleby's private room.

He returned presently without the bunch of papers and told the boy to enter the room.

Mr. Littleby, a smooth-faced, foxy-looking gentleman of average build, was seated at his desk making figures on a sheet of paper when the applicant for the messenger's job

entered and stood respectfully near by waiting for the broker to take notice of his presence.

The trader took his time and it was several minutes before he looked up.

Then he did so suddenly.

"Well, young man," he said, taking in the boy from head to foot.

"I called to see if you had got a messenger yet or not," said the lad respectfully.

"Who sent you here?"

"Nobody sent me, sir. Mr. Wade, Boothby & Co.'s cashier, told me that I might find an opening here."

"Oh, he did?"

"Yes, sir."

"Is Mr. Wade a friend of yours?"

"No, sir."

"Then how came he to tell you that we reeded a messenger?"

"Well, sir, Boothby & Co. advertised for a messenger, and I called there to try and get the position. I was too late, for they had hired a boy. Then Mr. Wade, the gentleman I saw there, suggested that I had better call on you, as he had heard you wanted a messenger, too."

"Oh, that was it?"

"Yes, sir."

"What is your name?"

"Robert Carson."

"Worked in Wall Street before?"

"No, sir.'

"Then you've had no experience-"

"Yes, sir."

"Where?"

"I was three years with Bates, Munyon & Co., stock brokers, of No. - Devonshire Street, Boston."

"How came you to leave them?"

"They went out of business."

"When?"

"A month ago."

"What brought you to New York? Parents move here?"

"No, sir. I have no parents."

"No parents, eh? Who are you living with?"

"My aunt. She's a widow and lives in the Bronx."

"What reference have you?"

"I can refer you to Mr. Bates on Mr. Edwards, of the late firm of Bates, Munvon & Co., of Boston. Here is a letter of recommendation from Mr. Bates," and the boy laid an envelope on the broker's desk.

Mr. Littleby pulled out the enclosure and read a recom-

mendation headed, "To whom it may concern."

The letter stated that Robert Carson had been three years in the employ of the firm of Bates, Munyon & Co., and during that time had conducted himself in a way to win the entire satisfaction of the firm as a bright and capable employee. The writer recommended him to any broker in need of an efficient messenger or junior clerk.
"Hum!" said Mr. Littleby. "You are not acquainted

with the financial district of this city, I assume?"

"I have been down here for nearly two weeks looking for a position, sir, and I have managed to get pretty well acquainted with Wall Street in that time."

"Do you know where the principal office buildings are?"

"Yes, sir."

Mr. Littleby catechised him a bit on the subject and found that he was not at all ignorant of the district.

The broker was pleased with his personal appearance and

his aptness and told him he'd give him a trial.

"If you make good we'll keep you. Are you ready to start in?"

"Yes, sir."

"Come with me."

He took Bob into the counting-room and introduced him to the cashier.

"I'm going to give him a trial for the rest of the week, Mr. Jones. It strikes me that he'll give satisfaction. Take his name and address. He will begin right away."

Ten minutes later Bob was given a note to take to a broker in the Vanderpool Building in Exchange Place.

He was back again with an answer in record time.

"Take it in to Mr. Mallison," said the cashier. "Mr. Littleby has gone to the Exchange."

So Bob took the envelope he had brought back with him into Mr. Mallison's room.

Mr. Mallison was the senior member of the firm in age.

He was a stout man of above the average height, also smoothly shaven.

He had rather a shifty eye, and a hard look, and Bob, wasn't particularly taken with him.

Mr. Mallison looked at the boy sharply as he took the

"Are you the boy Mr. Littleby hired as messenger?" he asked in an aggressive way.

"Yes, sir."

"Your name is-"

"Robert Carson."

"Humph! Come from Boston, I understand?"

"Yes, sir."

"Let me see your letter of recommendation."

Bob handed it to him and he read it.

"You're only on trial, you know. If we like you we'll keep you; otherwise not."

Bob nodded.

"That's all. I'll ring for you if I want you."

The boy returned to his seat in the waiting-room and took up a copy of the "Wall Street Argus" to while away the interval until he was wanted.

#### CHAPTER II.

#### BOB GETS IN ON THE MARKET.

During the five days of that week Bob proved so satisfactory that Mr. Littleby told him that he might regard his position as permanent.

By that time the boy found out that Littleby & Mallison did not enjoy the whole confidence of the Street.

He picked up his information piecemeal from different messenger boys with whom he became acquainted.

Littleby & Mallison had the reputation of being sharp and not over-scrupulous traders.

They were always laying traps for somebody, in which they caught a victim now and then, and when they got any one where the hair was short they squeezed him without any compunction.

Many traps in turn were spread for them, but it was

seldom they got caught.

While Bob would have preferred that the firm he was working for had a higher standing among the brokers, still he argued that it wasn't his business how Mr. Littleby and Mr. Mallison conducted their affairs.

Bob was soon on speaking terms with the clerks and the pretty stenographer, Miss Nannie Bachelor.

All but Walter Titus assumed a friendly attitude toward

Titus, who was quite a dude, thought it beneath his dignity to notice the young messenger, except on matters of business, when he would address Bob in a lofty and supercilious way.

It wasn't long before Bob saw that Titus was sweet on Miss Bachelor, and it was equally clear that the stenographer was not particularly impressed by the margin clerk.

One morning when Bob was waiting at the Exchange to deliver a note to Mr. Littleby he heard a couple of messengers speaking about a certain stock that was rising in the

"If I had \$50 I'd back it quicker than a wink," said one of them in a tone that showed he meant what he said.

"How do you know that it will go any higher than it is now?" asked his friend.

"Oh, I've got a tip on it."

"Who gave you the tip?"

"A broker I done a favor for."

"How high did he say it would go?"

"You won't say anything to anybody if I tell you?"

"Of course not."

"Honor bright?"

"Yes."

"He said it would go to 80."

"What is it at now?"

"Sixty-two."

"Eighteen dollars a share."

"Yes. If I had \$50 I'd go to the Nassau Street Banking & Brokerage Company and buy five shares. I could make nearly \$100 profit out of it."

"Couldn't you borrow \$50?"

"Me borrow \$50! Who'd lend it to me?"

That was a poser his friend couldn't answer.

"If you can't get the money you'll be out of it," he said.
"That's right. It's a shame, for it would be just like finding money."

Just then Littleby came to the rail and took Bob's note. He read it and dismissed his messenger with a nod.

Bob went away thinking of the stock the boys had been talking about.

It was a gilt-edge security known as L. & M.

"I've a great mind to take advantage of that boy's tip myself," thought Bob. "I've got between \$500 and \$600 I made in Boston out of the market, and it's lying idle. I've just been waiting for a good chance to add to it. I think this will be just the thing. L. & M. looks pretty good. It's gone up a point this morning since the Exchange opened. I wish I had my money down here, I'd put it up and take the chances. Well, I can bring it down to-morrow. Maybe that will be time enough to take advantage of the tip."

Along about noon, when he was in the counting-room, he heard Walter Titus and one of the other clerks talking about the same stock.

From the margin clerk's conversation Bob judged that he was working the market right along with pretty good success.

His idea about L. & M. was that it would go to 70 at least, and he said he was going to buy 25 shares of it when he went to lunch.

Later in the day Bob heard a group of brokers discussing L. & M. and the probabilities of a further rise in the price.

One broker thought that a pool was trying to boom it, but wouldn't assert that as a positive fact.

One or two thought the price was sure of getting up into the seventies, the rest were of the opinion that it might take a drop at any moment.

Next morning Bob brought \$500 downtown and when he got the chance that morning he went around to the little bank on Nassau Street and put it up as margin on 50 shares of L. & M. at 63.

To his great satisfaction the stock went up \$2 a share that day, closing at 65.

It was up another dollar at noon next day, and Bob was quite tickled over it.

At half-past twelve there was a lull in the office.

Most of the clerks went to lunch, and a couple of other stenographers came in with their parcels to eat with Miss Bachelor, as they often did, for she had a small electric heater which she could attach to the electric light wire and heat tea or coffee on it.

"Won't you take lunch with us, Bob?" asked Miss Bachelor, looking into the waiting-room.

"Thanks," replied the boy, "but I don't want to rob you."

"Oh, we have more than enough for ourselves. Do come in. I want to introduce you to my friends, anyway."

So Bob was induced to go into the stenographer's little den where Nannie made him acquainted with Miss Peters and Miss Pratt, who both worked on that floor.

The girls had seen Bob several times and had been aching for an introduction.

"Mr. Carson is from Boston," explained Nannie as she poured out the tea.

The girls smiled and Miss Peters asked him if Boston was a nice place to live.

"Bang-up," replied the young messenger, accepting a tongue sandwich from Miss Pratt.

"I suppose New York seems strange to you yet," said Miss Peters.

"Oh, I'm getting used to it fast. This town is a heap livelier than the Hub, and I wouldn't care to go back there."

"I suppose you left a number of broken-hearted young ladies there," laughed Miss Pratt, with a coquettish glance at him.

"Not that I'm aware of," grinned Bob. "I knew quite a number of girls there, but the New York girls that I've met beat them all hollow."

"I suppose we ought to take that as a compliment, Bob," smiled Nannie.

"You can if you want to. I'm bound to say that you three young ladies are by long odds the most charming I've ever got acquainted with in my life."

"Oh!" screamed the girls in chorus.

"You know that you're just trying to jolly us, said Miss Peters.

"Jolly you!" replied Bob with an innocent look. "I wouldn't think of doing that. I simply couldn't help telling the truth, that's all."

Miss Peters and Miss Pratt looked particularly pleased at the compliment.

Nannie, however, knew that Bob was just throwing a bouquet, and she shook her finger at him.

"This is fine tea, all right," remarked Bob.
"I'm glad you like it," replied Nannie.

"Oh, I like everything you make, you do it so well."

"Oh!" cried the two visitors again, feeling rather jealous of Miss Bachelor, who seemed to have the inside track with the young messenger.

"Thank you, Bob. You said that very nice," answered Nannie with an arch smile. "As this is the first thing you've ever tasted that I made how can you make such a sweeping assertion?"

"The tea is so good that it is easy to judge that whatever else you make must be equally first-class."

"That doesn't follow, Bob."

"Doesn't it? I'll bet you made this biscuit."

"How much will you bet?"

"A dollar."

"You're reckless with your money. However, I'll have to admit that I did make it."

"I knew it. It melts in my mouth. If I were looking for a wife I'd try to get you, and then I'd keep you busy making duplicates of this biscuit."

"Would you expect your wife to do nothing but make biscuits for you?" asked Miss Peters. "Oh, no. I'd expect her to dress up and look pretty most of the time."

"That would be easy for some girls."

"Yes, you three, for instance, wouldn't have much trouble in looking pretty, for it strikes me you are doing that every day."

"Oh!" screamed the visiting stenographers once more.

"Bob," said Nannie, with mock solemnity, "you mustn't fill these young ladies' heads with such compliments. They don't know you as well as I do."

"You don't know anything bad of me, do you?" grinned

he boy.

"Of course not. What a ridiculous question."

"You know I always tell the truth, don't you?"

"Yes; but you know you're an awful jollier, just the same."

"Did you ever hear me jolly you?"

"You haven't been doing anything but jolly the three of us since you came into my den."

"Gee! But that's a fierce reputation you're giving me. I guess I'd better retire before you throw me out."

"Oh, we couldn't let you go so soon," laughed Miss Pratt.
"You're awfully entertaining."

"Thanks. I'm glad somebody appreciates me."

The four young people continued to chat merrily together until their lunch time was up, when the visitors withdrew after expressing the hope that they would have the pleasure of seeing Bob soon again.

That afternoon L. & M. closed at 67.

Two days later it was up to 70, and the brokers were beginning to take a great deal of interest in it.

Under the impression that a boom was on the tapis the traders started in to buy it right and left.

Then the fact developed that there wasn't enough on the market to go around.

That discovery sent the price to 75 at a bound.

The newspapers had been calling the public's attention to the stock, and now they printed articles in their financial columns indicating that a boom was really on in L. & M.

Orders from outside speculators for the stock helped the price still higher, and eight days from the time Bob bought his 50 shares the stock was going at 82 3-8.

At that figure he sold out, clearing a profit of \$950.

"That's more than two years' wages as a messenger," he said to himself, after figuring out the amount of his winnings. "New York is the place to make money after all, and Wall Street is the right locality to do it in. I suppose my bosses would put up a stiff kick if they knew I was monkeying with the market, but it isn't likely they'll ever hear anything about it. I'm sure I'm not going to tell them, and there is nobody but the margin clerk at the bank to give me away, and he's not telling on the bank's customers. I must buy Nannie Bachelor a box of candy on this, and my aunt a new dress and hat to match. I tell you a fellow feels finer than silk when he's on the right side of the market."

#### CHAPTER III.

MR. MALLISON HAS A VISITOR WHO MEANS BUSINESS.

When Bob got home that afternoon he handed his aunt a five-dollar bill and two tens.

"Here's a present for you, aunty," he said. "I want you to get yourself a new dress and a new hat."

"Dear me, Bob, where did you get all that money?" she

asked in surprise.

"Didn't I tell you that I brought \$550 with me from Boston?"

"I forget whether you did or not. Do you really wish me to use this money on myself?"

"Of course I do. Didn't I say so?"

"I am very much obliged to you, Bob."

"Don't mention it."

Next morning he brought Nannie Bachelor a pound box of the best chocolates.

"I heard that you have a sweet tooth, Nannie. Here's something to feed it with," he said, laying the package on her desk.

"Why, what is this—candy?" she exclaimed in surprise.

"Surest thing in the world."

"Dear me, how extravagant you are!"

"Yes, I was born so, and can't help it."

"You're awfully good, Bob," she said, opening the box.

"Oh, that's just a small evidence of my appreciation of the lunch you treated me to the other day."

"Dear me, that was hardly more than a bite."

"There was quality, if not quantity, to it. I can taste that biscuit yet. You must be a fine cook."

"I can cook a little," she replied with a smile. "Mother taught me how."

"Well, the next time you make a batch of those biscuits don't forget to bring me one. They're out of sight."

"I'll bring you half a dozen," she replied, pleased with Bob's appreciation of her cooking.

"Thanks. I won't do a thing to them. Well, I must get back to my post, or the cashier might think I haven't got down yet."

Ten minutes later Bob was out on the street with two

messages to deliver.

Business was rushing and he didn't have much time to rest himself before three o'clock.

Half an hour before the Exchange closed he was seated in his chair when a big man entered the office and asked for Mr. Mallison.

"He's in. What name shall I say?"

"Never mind my name, sonny. Just tell him a gentleman wishes to see him."

Bob carried the message to Mr. Mallison.

"What does he want?" asked the broker.

"He didn't say, sir," replied Bob.

"Well, go and ask him his business. I have no time to waste on—"

The broker got no further, for the stranger walked into the room at that moment.

"Hello, Mallison!" he said. "I'll take a seat if it's all the same to you."

"Oh, it's you, Singleton, is it?" replied the broker, scowling at the man.

"Yes, it's me, all right. You can go, bub," he added to Bob.

Bob retired.

"What do you want?" growled Mr. Mallison.

"I want what's coming to me," replied the visitor, throwing one leg across the other.

"What in thunder do you mean?" demanded the broker.

"I mean just what I said. You got me into a tight hole awhile ago and cleaned me out down to bedrock. I just found out that you rung in a cold deck on me, so I came around to make you ante up the money you and your partners skinned me out of."

"Are you crazy, Singleton?" roared Mr. Mallison.

"Not that I'm aware of," replied the man coolly. "I bought 1,000 shares of A, & B. of you on the usual margin. I put up \$10,000 to hold it. The stock went down seven points on the market. Very good. I don't find no fault with that. But it didn't really go any further, yet next day you reported me sold out."

"Why, the stock dropped four points in ten minutes, making eleven altogether, and that wiped out your margin, leaving you in debt to us something over \$1,000, which you

haven't paid."

"Yes, so it appeared from the quotations on the tape," replied the visitor; "but who was responsible for those quotations?"

"How should I know?" growled Mr. Mallison impatiently.

"Oh, you don't know anything about it, eh?"

"Of course not."-

"Haven't the least idea that your partner Littleby arranged a number of wash sales with Boothby & Co. to clean me out?" replied the visitor, sarcastically.

"Wash sales!" roared Mr. Mallison. "Do you mean to

insult me?"

"No, I don't believe I could. Well, I have evidence that the sales were put through by Littleby, your partner, and Anderson, of Boothby & Co. The object was to get a low quotation on the tape so that you could gobble up my \$10,000. You're done that trick before on other people. That's one way you make money. Let me say that for a low-down skin game it's about the limit."

"If you came in here to insult me, Singleton, you'd better go before I call for somebody to put you out," said the

broker, red with anger.

"I'll go as soon as you hand over my \$10,000 in cash," replied the visitor.

"If you don't get out of here right away I'll 'phone for an officer."

"I don't think you will."

Mr. Mallison's hand glided over to the electric button on

"No, you don't, Mr. Mallison," said the visitor, grabbing his wrist with one hand and drawing a revolver and pressing it against the broker's temple with the other. "I want \$10,000, and I want it quick. Ante up, or, by thunder, I'll blow your roof off, and shoot myself afterward!"

The tone and attitude of the man showed that he meant business, and Mr. Mallison turned deathly pale.

The trader was not anxious to take a sudden and painful departure from this world, neither did he feel like yielding up \$10,000.

Nevertheless the choice of the two evils was forced on him.

He would have given a whole lot if his partner had suddenly stepped into his room at that moment, or even if his young messenger had opened the door.

Nothing of the kind happened, however, and the broker breathed hard.

"What are you going to do, Mallison?" asked the visitor. "I shouldn't think you'd hesitate a moment. Ten thousand dollars isn't much for you to pay for your life."

"You've no right to hold me up at the point of a revol-

ver. It's a felony," said the broker.

"No, it isn't. I'm only asking you to make good the money you skinned me out of."

"You were skinned out of nothing."

"I've done all the arguing I'm going to do. I came here to get my money or—your life. You can take your choice, and I'll give you a minute to make up your mind on the subject."

"All right," replied Mr. Mallison, apparently yielding to the inevitable, "I'll write a check for the sum you want."

"I have no use for your check. I want the money in good bills."

"All right. I'll go and get it from my cashier."

"No, you won't. Think I'm a fool to let you out of my sight?"

"But I haven't got the money about me," said Mr. Mallison. "Do you suppose I carry so large a sum around in

my clothes?"

"No. Ring for your boy and tell him to get the money from the cashier. If you give him the slightest hint how matters stand I'll shoot you down quicker than a wink and will afterward put a ball into my own head so that I'll meet you beside the River Styx, and old man Charon will ferry us over together."

Mr. Mallison shuddered at the cool, determined manner of the man who held him in his power, and saw that he'd

have to pay the money to save himself.

"As my cashier may not have so much money on hand I'll draw a check for \$10,000 payable to my own order, and send it to the bank by my messenger to get it cashed."

The visitor looked at the clock. It wanted six minutes of three.

"You'd better lose no time about it, then," he said.
"The bank will close in six minutes. If you fail to get the money something will happen."

The broker hastily drew his pocketbook toward him, filled out a check for \$10,000 payable to "Cash," and

tapped his bell.

The visitor concealed his revolver, but kept his eye on

Mr. Mallison.

"Remember," he hissed, "if you give the slightest sign to your boy I'll kill you like a dog."

As the last word left his lips Bob entered the room.

"Bob," said the broker, "take this check to the bank in double-quick time, get the money and bring it in here. You've got less than five minutes to reach the bank before it closes, so get a hustle on."

"Yes, sir," replied Bob, taking the check and hastily

leaving the room.

#### CHAPTER IV.

BOB'S CHASE OF SINGLETON.

Bob got back with the money in twelve minutes.

He rushed into Mr. Mallison's private room and handed it to him.

"Count it, Mr. Mallison, and see if it's all right," he said. "You needn't wait, bub," said the visitor impatiently. Bob, however, didn't budge.

He wasn't taking directions from strange people.

He noticed that his employer's hands trembled as he wipe the blood away from the wound. began to count the money. "Know anything about this trouble

"I said you could go," said Singleton, savagely, to the

boy.

"I take my orders from Mr. Mallison, not from strangers," replied Bob calmly.

"Tell him to get out, Mallison," said the visitor in a

tense voice.

"You can go, Bob," said the broker in such a shaky tone that the boy looked at him hard, and then noticed how white and agitated he was.

"Yes, sir," replied Bob, moving toward the door, not

quite satisfied with the situation.

He closed the door after him and started for his chair. "I wonder if there's anything wrong in there?" he asked himself. "Things look a bit queer. I guess that chap is turning the screws on the boss about something. Got him in a hole over some deal. That would account for—what's that?"

Bob heard something that sounded like a groan and then a fall.

On the spur of the moment he sprang back for the private room door.

It was opened in his face and Singleton came rushing out.

A collision between the boy and the visitor was inevitable, and both went down on the floor.

The package of bills flew from the visitor's grasp.

"Confound you, boy!" roared Singleton. "Take that!" He struck Bob in the face and jumped to his feet.

Bob, though partially dazed by the blow, grabbed the man by the leg and he fell on his face as he was reaching for the bills.

"What does this mean?" demanded the voice of Mr. Littleby.

He had just returned from the Exchange and was astonished to see what seemed to be a scrap going on in the waiting-room.

The cashier and one of the clerks, attracted by the disturbance, ran out of the counting-room.

Singleton kicked out furiously in an effort to release his leg from Bob's hold.

Just then Littleby happened to glance into his partner's private room and saw Mallison's head lying across the back of his swivel chair, and the blood running from a wound on his forehead where the visitor had struck the broker with the butt of his revolver in order to keep him from giving the alarm after he had left the room.

Littleby at once suspected foul play.

"Don't let that man get away," he said to his cashier, as he ran inside to his partner.

There was little danger of Singleton getting away owing

to Bob's grasp.

The cashier and Titus laid hold of Singleton's arms, and for a few minutes there was uproar to burn in the waitingroom.

Then the visitor was overcome. Bob released his leg and got up. "Get some water, Bob, quick!" said Littleby in an excited voice.

Bob ran into the lavatory and got a tumbler of water.

Littleby took it and began to bathe his partner's face, and

"Know anything about this trouble, Bob?" asked Littleby.

"No, sir. I didn't see anything wrong, though I suspected all was not right."

"Suspected, eh? What aroused your suspicions?"

Bob told him.

Littleby stepped to the door and looked at the still struggling visitor.

Then he recognized him as Singleton.

"Fetch him in here," he said to the cashier.

Singleton renewed his efforts to get away and succeeded in planting a heavy blow on the margin clerk's right eye, knocking him down.

Then he grabbed the cashier, swung him around and threw him against Littleby.

Snatching up the package of bills from the floor he started for the door leading into the corridor.

Bob was after him like a flash and caught him just as he reached the head of the stairs.

In the struggle that ensued both lost their balance and went rolling down the steps.

They came to a stop at the turn, and the fight between them was renewed.

Singleton was a strong man, and he was desperate.

Bob, however, clung to him with the tenacity of a bull-dog.

The racket began to attract notice among the people passing in the corridor below.

The cashier also came on the scene and started to take a hand in the scrap.

Singleton was not easily downed.

He succeeded in shaking off both Bob and the cashier and dashed for the corridor below where the elevator stood open.

Singleton dived into the cage just as the man started to close the gate, alighting on his hands and feet on the floor.

Bob arrived at the elevator just as the cage disappeared downward.

Another cage came down a moment later and Bob stopped it.

Getting in, he was whirled to the ground floor, reaching it just in time to see Singleton vanishing through the main entrance into Wall Street.

Bob lost not a moment in continuing the pursuit.

He saw Singleton getting into a cab thirty feet away.

He rushed after it and succeeded catching on to the rear of the vehicle, where he clung like a leech as it drove up toward Broadway.

His action naturally attracted notice.

"Whip behind!" shouted a small messenger boy to the driver.

The cabman did not pay any attention to the hail and kept on.

At the corner of Broadway the cab slowed up to get out of the way of an express wagon.

Bob jumped down, rushed to the door of the slowly-

moving vehicle, turned the handle, and pulling the door open sprang inside and grabbed the astonished Singleton.

A dozen people saw the action and gazed after the cab as it dashed up Broadway with the door open, and Bob and Singleton in each other's embrace.

"You young monkey!" roared Singleton. "Let me go."

"Not on your life!" replied the young messenger.

Exerting all his strength, he jabbed the man's head against the glass of the opposite door.

There was a crash of glass, and the cabman looked around.

He saw that there was trouble in his vehicle and reined

Passersby on the street were also attracted by the sight of two persons fighting in the cab and a crowd soon col-

"Here, here!" cried the driver, coming to the door of his vehicle. "This won't do."

He reached out and seized Bob.

Singleton, with the back of his head bleeding, pushed the boy away from him.

Then he opened the other door, stepped out into the street and hopped aboard a passing car.

"Let me go!" roared Bob, seeing that Singleton was making his escape:

He shook the cabby off, sprang out of the other door and started after the car which was going uptown.

Singleton left the car at the corner of Pine and dashed bare-headed and bleeding down that street.

Bob followed him fifty yards behind.

Quite a number of persons followed after Bob.

Some excited individual shouted "Stop thief!" and the cry was taken up by others.

Although a score of persons might have headed Singleton off before he reached Nassau Street, nobody interfered with the chase.

Bob, however, gained on Singleton and was only thirty feet behind him when he turned into Nassau Street.

The man took to the center of the narrow thoroughfare and Bob did likewise.

A big crowd was now following Bob, who was close on Singleton's heels.

The boy was almost within reaching distance of the man when the fellow suddenly sprang for the sidewalk.

He struck the handle of an Italian's fruit wagon, drawn up alongside the curb, and over went the wagon right in Bob's way.

In a moment the young messenger was floundering in the midst of the upset cart and its contents.

Singleton, seeing his advantage, ran into a narrow office entrance and rushed up the well-worn stairs.

Bob, pretty well out of breath, extricated himself from the wreck of the wagon, and avoiding the grasp of the angry Italian, who wanted to hold him responsible for the ruin caused by Singleton, followed his quarry into the office building.

Singleton had got as far as the first landing when Bob caught a fleeting glance of him, and up the boy went as fast as he could go.

There was no elevator in the building, for it was an oldfashioned four-story edifice, long since out of date.

Singleton continued straight up the three flights, but less.

neither he nor Bob made rapid progress, as both were pretty well exhausted.

When Bob staggered on to the top corridor, Singleton had disappeared.

There were three doors on the floor, and thinking the man had taken refuge in one of the offices, Bob tried the doors in turn, only to find all of them locked.

The small window at the rear of the corridor was half open and the boy looked out of it.

He saw Singleton had taken a desperate chance to escape. The man had stood up on the sill, reached for the iron gutter pipe and was now close to the waste pipe at the end of the building.

Apparently he meant to slide down that precarious route. While Bob was watching him he reached the pipe, but instead of grasping it and lowering himself to the narrow back yard below he swung one leg up on the adjoining roof, which was two feet lower than that of the building he had left, and by a muscular effort followed with his body and disappeared.

#### CHAPTER V.

HOW BOB CAPTURES SINGLETON AND INCREASES HIS CAPITAL.

"My gracious! He's got a great nerve," thought Bob. "I've got to follow or lose him. I don't know that I'm paid to risk my life, but if the gutter is strong enough to hold a heavy man like him it ought to hold me. Well, here goes. I can't let the fellow outwit me after all the trouble I've had trying to catch him."

Bob swung himself out of the window and commenced his perilous passage of the gutter just as the advance guard of persons following him reached the window.

Bob, hanging by his hands alone, one hundred and fifty feet from the ground, made his way along the gutter as fast as he dared.

Reaching the waste pipe he swung himself up on the next roof as he had seen Singleton do.

It was much easier for him to accomplish the trick, as he was as active as a young monkey.

When he rolled over on the roof he looked around for Singleton, but couldn't see any trace of the man.

"I'm afraid he's got away after all," he breathed, much

At that moment he saw a figure six buildings away kneeling beside a scuttle, apparently trying to open it.

"I'll bet that's him," thought Bob.

He started over the roofs at a lively pace, and was soon satisfied that the man was Singleton.

The fellow found he could not open the scuttle and

The next building was the corner one, and as he started for that he saw Bob coming toward him.

He lost no time springing for the last scuttle in that row. As he stooped to try it Bob was close upon him.

The scuttle, however, wasn't secured, and Singleton, throwing it open, jumped down.

He missed his footing on the ladder in his rush and fell to the floor, landing in a heap.

When Bob looked down he saw him lying there motion-

"That's the time he got it in the neck. His hash is settled now for sure," said the boy to himself as he slipped down the ladder and stopped beside the senseless man.

The package of money was sticking out of Singleton's

side pocket and Bob took possession of it.

"I guess he won't be able to get away for some time," thought the boy. "I'll have time enough to go down to the street and get a policeman to take charge of him."

There was quite a crowd standing around the doorway of the building that Singleton and Bob had entered in the first place.

Bob decided not to go there.

He walked into the corner store and asked permission to use the telephone to communicate with the police.

He was granted the privilege and was soon talking to

the man in charge of the station.

Two officers were sent to meet Bob and take Singleton into custody.

When they arrived the boy guided them up to the top

floor where the man lay still unconscious.

The policeman dragged him down to the sidewalk, shoved him into an express wagon standing near, and the whole party drove to Littleby & Mallison's office in Wall Street.

By that time Singleton had come to his senses.

He was marched to the elevator and taken to the office.

Mr. Mallison had long since been brought to his senses and was talking to his partner when Bob, the officers and their prisoner arrived.

The brokers had communicated with the police, but they were surprised to see Bob walk in with the news that he had captured Singleton, for they supposed that he had gone home.

"I don't know whether this money rightfully belongs to the man or not," said Bob, laying the package on Mr. Mallison's desk; "but I took it from him on suspicion that he might have come by it wrongfully. The man and two policemen are in the room outside. The officers want to know what the charge is against the prisoner."

"Tell them to fetch him in here," said Littleby.

After the policemen had brought Singleton into the room they were asked to retire to the waiting-room while the

brokers interviewed the prisoner privately.

Bob walked into the counting-room and told all hands how he had chased and captured the man whose name he now learned was Singleton, a former customer of the house, who had been sold out on a sudden slump in the stock he was holding for a rise.

Bob was complimented upon his long chase, and his daring passage of the iron gutter pipe, but for which Singleton must have escaped.

Walter Titus's eye was beginning to show signs of discoloration, and it would probably be a dandy black optic by the next morning.

the heat morning.

Nannie Bachelor shuddered when Bob told her about the way he trusted his life to the gutter pipe.

"What a rash boy you are!" she exclaimed. "If that pipe had given way you probably would have been killed."

"It didn't give way under Singleton, and I'm many pounds lighter than him," replied the young messenger. "I wouldn't have caught him if I hadn't risked the trip."

"I don't like to hear about you taking such chances," she said.

"Oh, I guess we all take worse chances in the streets every day if we only knew it. What, with automobiles, live electric wires, and one thing or another, no one can tell when they leave home in the morning whether they'll get back again at night. I tell you times aren't what they used to be when stages were running on Broadway."

"What do you know about stages on Broadway?" laughed Nannie. "They stopped running before you and I were born. Besides, you're a Bostonian and not a native of little

old New York."

"Oh, I merely referred in a general way to the times when stages ran in this city to kind of emphasize my statement that times were not so strenuous anywhere in those days. Stages and horse cars didn't run people down like the trolley roads do now with their rapid transit speed. Everything is on the rush now, and the public has to keep on the hop, skip and jump to avoid trouble."

In the meantime the interview between Singleton and the two brokers resulted in a settlement of the trouble be-

tween themselves.

Each of the officers received a \$10 bill for their trouble, and were told what report to make at the station.

Singleton also received some money in settlement of his alleged claim, and thus the exciting incident was closed.

Mr. Littleby called Bob into his office and handed him a \$100 bill for his unusual services, and he was directed to say nothing further about it.

A reporter who came around in quest of information was choked off by Littleby, who told him that the incident

really amounted to nothing.

As nothing appeared on the police blotter, of course there was no groundwork on which to build a story of facts.

Bob had his own opinion of the whole affair, and it only confirmed his private estimate of the firm for which he was working.

He heard more than one pair of brokers talking about "that mysterious affair at Littleby & Mallison's," and the general feeling in the Street was not favorable toward the firm of brokers.

"I'm thinking there's a good bit of sharp practice done in our office," he said to himself. "If there are any foxier traders in Wall Street than my bosses I'd like to know who they are. I wish I was working for somebody else. I hate to have the other messengers kidding me about Littleby & Mallison. They make no bones about calling them skins. A decent fellow doesn't like to work for a house with a shady reputation. It gives him a kind of black eye. People judge you by the company you are in. Well, I suppose I can't afford to quit till I find something better."

Nothing happened for several weeks to vary the usual

run of Bob's experience in Wall Street.

He kept his eye on the ticker whenever the chance was his, and that was either in the morning when he first reached the office, or just before he left for home in the afternoon after the customers had departed.

He also read all the Wall Street news in the financial and other daily papers, and was always in close touch with business in the district.

One morning he was sent with a note to a broker named Thompson in the Mills Building.

While waiting to see the trader, who was very busy at the time, Bob overheard two well-dressed men talking about a pool that was forming to boom S. & T. shares.

They didn't seem to notice the boy, who was the only person near them, and they went on talking in low tones about the matter.

Bob soon discovered that one more man was needed to complete the pool and that the two gentlemen had called for the purpose of interesting Broker Thompson in the scheme.

The young messenger heard enough to convince him that S. & T. stock was a good thing to own about that time.

So next morning he brought his \$1,500 downtown and left an order at the little bank for the purchase of 150 shares at the market, which was 72.

A week later S. & T. began to get a move on, and in a few days was going at 80.

Then the brokers took notice of the fact that a certain trader was buying all he could get of it at the Exchange.

That made them think it had been depressed for speculative purposes, and they began buying every share they could find.

Thousands of shares were dealt in during the succeeding week and the price went to 90.

Bob thought it about time for him to sell out, though indications pointed to a continued rise to par.

He told the margin clerk to have his 150 shares sold at the market in the morning.

"All right," replied the clerk. "I'll attend to it. It closed at 95, but may open a point higher from the look of things, which will be in your favor."

Next morning Bob watched for the opening quotation and saw that it was 95 3-4.

Basing his profits on that he figured out that he had cleared \$3,500 on the deal.

"That makes me worth \$5,000. I haven't done so bad since I came to New York," he said in a tone of satisfaction. "If I keep on at that rate I may yet die a millionaire. I wonder how it feels to be worth a million? A fellow could go abroad and see all the wonders of the world on a good deal less than that. In fact, you could do that and live well on the interest alone of a million dollars. Just to think, some of these money kings down here think nothing of making a million or two in a day. I know that one big banker formed a syndicate and bought \$50,000,000 worth of city bonds, and the difference between what he paid for the bonds and what he afterward sold them for in small lots netted him about \$7,000,000. You can nearly always make money with money if you're smart. And the more money you have at hand the more you can make. I'll be able to increase my wad faster on \$5,000 than I could if it was only \$500. That is, if things go the right way, of course. If they should happen to go the wrong way, then I'm likely to go flat broke."

#### CHAPTER VI.

BOB HAS A RUN-IN WITH WALTER TITUS.

Bob often accepted an invitation from Nannie Bachelor to eat lunch with her and her friends, Miss Peters and Miss Pratt.

The girls liked Bob's free-and-easy ways immensely, because he never got fresh with them, and was always gentlemanly in his conduct, and considerate of their feelings.

He had a knack of giving them sly shots that tickled them greatly.

Another person trying to imitate Bob's tactics might have offended them.

Bob always repaid the girls for their hospitality in candy, or flowers, or some little thing he knew would please them.

Altogether he was pretty solid with them.

Walter Titus sometimes came back from his own lunch while the girls were still eating theirs.

He always butted in without even waiting to be asked.

He had the idea that he was irresistible with the girls not Miss Bachelor and her two friends in particular, but all girls.

He was a good-looking fellow, and he knew it.

In his opinion all the girls he met were dying to make his acquaintance, while those who had the honor of knowing him were striving to win a smile from him.

In his attempt to fascinate Nannie Bachelor his selfesteem was subjected to several rude shocks.

She refused to accept candy or flowers from him, though she accepted both from Bob; but then there was a whole lot of difference in the way Titus and Bob offered the

presents.

Bob presented the candy or flowers in an off-hand way that left no feeling of obligation on the part of the recipient; while on the other hand Titus showed that his purpose was to impress the girl with his importance and make her feel that she owed him a favor in return.

One day Titus came in while Bob was eating with the girls.

The four were having a high old time, and the margin clerk felt that he ought to be included in the good time, too.

He felt jealous of Bob because he knew that the young messenger was well up in the good graces of the office stenographer.

"Well, young ladies, you seem to be enjoying yourselves,"

he said with one of his most fetching smiles.

The girls barely glanced at him, and paid very little attention to his speech.

Bob was telling them a funny story at the time and they were listening to him.

Titus didn't relish the scanty notice they gave him.

He thought they ought to have taken their hats off to him at once.

Bob seemed to be the whole thing with the girls and Titus objected to it.

"What are you doing in here, Carson?" he growled, interrupting the story.

"Eating my lunch," grinned Bob.

"I wasn't aware that you brought your lunch down-

"I don't bring it. To-day I accepted an invitation from these young ladies to eat with them, and vou now behold me polishing off the last scrap."

"I suppose you are congratulating yourself on having saved fifteen cents," said Titus sneeringly.

"That's where you're mistaken, Mr. Titus. I'm congratulating myself on having saved two or three dollars."

"Two or three dollars!"

"You can't get a light repast in Delmonico's for much less."

"Delmonico's! Have you been telling these young ladies that you lunch at Delmonico's?"

"No. But this lunch suits me as well as a Delmonico lunch."

"What do you know about a Delmonico lunch?" sniffed Titus.

"I've heard you can get tip-top things there. Ever lunch at that establishment yourself?"

"I should say I have," replied the margin clerk pompously.

"I guess I'll have to take it in some time," laughed Bob.

"They don't let boys like you in the dining-room."

"How do you know they don't?"

"Because boys couldn't pay the price."

"That doesn't apply to me. I'm a small capitalist."

"A mighty small one, I guess," snorted Titus. "There's your bell now. Run along, sonny. The young ladies can dispense with your society."

"I guess it's time for us to go, too," said Miss Peters,

looking at Miss Pratt.

"Don't hurry, young ladies," said the dude clerk. "You're welcome to remain as long as you wish. In fact, I might say that your presence here is like a couple of sunbeams."

The two visitors failed to go into raptures over the compliment.

In fact, they didn't even smile, but rose in some haste, and without noticing the clerk said good-bye to Nannie and walked away.

Miss Bachelor also rose and carried the cups, saucers and plates into the lavatory without paying any attention to him, either.

It was rather a pointed snub, and Titus was greatly taken aback.

As a matter of fact, the three girls were not pleased at the way Titus had spoken to Bob, trying to make little of him in their presence, and they showed their resentment by giving him the cold shoulder.

Titus went back to his desk feeling as mad as a hornet, and he decided that the only way he could get satisfaction

was to take it out of Bob.

About ten o'clock next morning Mr. Littleby called Bob into his room.

"I want you to take a package containing two West Shore bonds down to George Gallagher, No. 1 Broadway. His office is on the eleventh floor."

"All right, sir."

"On your way back stop in at Lawyer Goodrich's office, at 115 Broadway, hand him this note and bring me back his answer.

"Yes, sir," said Bob.

"If Mr. Goodrich should give you a legal document fetch it in here. If I'm engaged with Mr. Mallison in his office sit down and wait till I come in."

Bob got his hat and was presently on the street.

He delivered the package of bonds to Mr. Gallagher and then made his way to the lawyer's office, handed Mr. Goodrich the note addressed to him and received a legal document in return, with which he hastened back to the office. Titus?"

Mr. Littleby wasn't in his room, so he asked the cashier if that gentleman was engaged with Mr. Mallison.

Receiving an answer in the affirmative he returned to the private room and sat down to await Mr. Littleby's appearance.

He picked up a copy of a financial daily that lay on the boss's desk and began reading the latest ticker news.

He was very much interested in a paragraph which stated that two Western railroads were reported as being about to consolidate when Walter Titus entered the room with a paper in his hand.

He looked at Bob, who appeared to be taking things

uncommonly easy.

The young messenger, after glancing at him, resumed his reading.

"Well, upon my word, young fellow, you seem to have a soft snap in this office!" the margin clerk said in an unpleasant tone.

"What makes you think I have?" replied Bob, coolly.

"What are you doing in here?" demanded Titus.

"Studying."

"Loafing, you mean," retorted Titus angrily.

Bob made no answer, but went on reading the paper.

"What are you studying?" asked Titus curiously.

"How to mind my own business. It wouldn't be a bad plan on your part to take a few lessons in the same thing."

"How dare you talk to me in that manner?" roared the margin clerk furiously.

"I thought you needed the information."

"You young whippersnapper, take that!"

He stepped forward and fetched Bob a slap across the face that made the boy's cheek tingle unpleasantly.

Then something happened that Titus wasn't looking for. Bob dropped the paper, jumped to his feet and smashed the margin clerk in the eye so hard that he staggered back against the door just as it was opened and Mr. Littleby walked into the room.

"Hey! Hey! What's this?" demanded the broker, pushing Titus away, for the clerk had trod on one of his corns.

"Bob Carson hit me a blow in the eye," replied Titus, smothering his rage in the presence of his employer.

"What's the trouble between you and Titus," Littleby asked his messenger.

"He slapped me in the face," replied Bob, "and I won't stand that from anybody."

"He insulted me," gritted Titus.

"If you will let me explain, sir, I'll tell you how the thing happened," said Bob.

"Explain, then," answered Littleby sharply.

Bob told how he was sitting quietly in the chair beside the desk reading a copy of the "Daily Argus" and waiting for Mr. Littleby according to his instructions, when Titus

He recited the margin clerk's remarks and the answers he had given back.

"He got mad because I told him he'd better learn how to mind his own business, and slapped me in the face. Then I struck him back. That's the whole thing."

"Well, I won't have this sort of thing in my office. Understand that, both of you. What brought you in here,

"I came to hand you this paper," replied the margin clerk deferentially.

"You can return to your desk," said Littleby, taking the paper. "What did you bring from Goodrich?" he asked, turning to Bob.

"This legal paper," replied the boy, handing it to him.

Littleby unfolded and glanced over it.

He scowled as though he were not pleased with its contents.

"Tell Mr. Mallison I want to see him a moment," he said to Bob.

The boy carried the message to the elder member of the firm, and then returned to his seat in the waiting-room.

#### CHAPTER VII.

#### BOB'S GALLANT ACT.

The margin clerk was in a mighty bad humor when he returned to his desk.

He felt he was in for another black eye, and he hadn't forgotten the guying he received over the former one he got from Singleton.

"Hello! What's the matter with your eye?" asked the second bookkeeper, whose desk faced his. "Run against something?" with a suspicious grin.

"Nothing is the matter with it," scowled Titus.

"No? Well, it looks bad. Better send Carson out for a piece of raw beef or an oyster to put on it right away, or you'll have another decorated optic in the morning."

"Mind your business, will you?" snarled the clerk.

The second bookkeeper said no more, but he put the other two clerks on to Titus.

The junior clerk, whose name was Fred Barton, pretty soon found an excuse to consult Titus about some matter.

After he got his answer he looked at the margin clerk sympathetically.

"What have you been doing to your eye, Mr. Titus? It

"Cut it out!" growled Titus. "I don't want any remarks on the subject. I got a cold in it last night."

"I had a cold in one of my eyes like that once," said the junior clerk, smothering a grin, "and I cured it with a raw oyster. They say that's a sure remedy."

"Go to thunder!" roared Titus with a red face.

Presently Bob went through to the lavatory. The junior clerk called him over to his desk.

"Get on to the fine eye Titus has got," he said. "He must have run into some kind of an obstruction while he was away from his desk awhile ago."

"He did," replied Bob. "He ran against my fist."

"Go on, Bob! You didn't hit him, did you? We'd have heard the racket if you two had been scrapping in the reception-room."

"It didn't happen in the waiting-room."
"Where, then? Out in the corridor?"

"No, in Mr. Littleby's private office."

"The dickens you say!" cried Barton in some astonishment. "Tell me how it came about."

Bob told him what occurred between him and the margin clerk in Littleby's room.

"You must have given him a dandy punch," chuckled the junior clerk.

"I guess he won't forget it in a hurry. I'm sorry I didn't get a couple of more in. He's been trying to sit on me ever since I came to work here."

"We've all noticed that he appears to hold a grouch against you. He's jealous because you're so thick with Miss Bachelor. He's sweet on her, and she barely notices him. She doesn't seem to fancy his style, and I don't blame her."

"Yesterday, when I was eating lunch with Miss Bachelor and her friends, Miss Peters and Miss Pratt, he came along and tried to make me feel like thirty cents before the girls. I felt like punching him then and there. I believe I would hav done so, only I didn't want to make a scene before Miss Bachelor's visitors."

"Well, he'll have a nice black eye again to-morrow," said Barton, turning to his work.

It wasn't long before it was known all over the countingroom that Titus had got his damaged eye from Bob, and he heard about it after awhile.

That made him furious against the young messenger, and he began to consider how he could get back at the boy.

He wished he could get Bob in trouble with the firm so as to bring about his discharge.

That would have been balm to his soul.

A few days later Bob learned that a big broker by the name of Lumley was buying all the shares of D. & P. he could get.

It was known as a good reputable stock, but just at present it was selling lower than usual in the market.

It was then going at 80.

Bob looked up all the information he could obtain about D. & P., and was satisfied it was worth buying on general principles, without reference to a possible boom.

Accordingly as he had money enough to put up on a marginal deal of 500 shares he went to the little bank and left an order with the margin clerk for the purchase of that much D. & P. for his account.

He dropped in at the bank that afternoon on his way home and found that the stock had been bought at 80, and that the bank was holding it subject to his order.

Bob hardly expected the stock to go above 90, if it went as high as that.

An advance of ten points, however, would give him a profit of \$5,000, and that was a very satisfactory outlook.

Next day the price was down to 78 5-8.

That fact didn't greatly worry Bob, though, for he knew it would have to go down about ten points before he would be wiped out, and until he was actually cleaned out there was always the chance of the price going up again.

From his general knowledge of D. & P. he thought there was little danger that it would drop to any extent.

He figured that it was due for a rise, and moreover Broker Lumley was still buying the stock whenever it was offered him in the Exchange.

For several days D. & P. hung around 79, and then it advanced to 81.

Bob rubbed his hands with satisfaction when he saw the quotation on the tape.

"I wish I had 5,000 instead of 500 shares of the stock," he said to himself as he returned to his seat.

While Bob was building aircastles around D. & P. a

poorly-dressed but very pretty girl opened the door and walked into the office in a shy kind of way.

"Who do you wish to see, miss?" asked the boy, getting up and going to her.

"Is Mr. Littleby or Mr. Mallison in?" she asked in an embarrassed way.

"No, miss, but Mr. Mallison will be back from his lunch any moment. Please take a seat," said Bob, treating her with as much deference as though she were a duchess.

He never treated a person who looked poor any different

from one who seemed to be well off.

If Bob was behind the age in this respect it was greatly to his credit.

He always followed the golden rule strictly, because his mother had taught him to pay strict attention to it, and he believed everything his dead mother had said was right.

The fair visitor sat down on a chair and looked at the

rug on the floor.

Bob watched her out of the corner of his eyes and wondered who she was and what business she had with the firm.

"She's got the face of an angel," he said, "but she looks as poor as Job's turkey."

The longer Bob looked at her the more interested he became in her.

In fact, he could hardly keep his eyes off her.

"I'd like to know her," he mused. "She's different from most girls I see. She is not a gadabout or a flyaway. If she were dressed in silks I'll bet she'd be just as modest and sweet as she looks now."

In about ten minutes Mr. Mallison entered and went directly to his private office.

Bob got up and went to the girl.

"Mr. Mallison has just come in, miss. If you will tell me your name and give me an idea of your business with the firm I'll announce you to Mr. Mallison."

"My name is Miss Manson. I came to see if I can sell a few shares of railroad stock belonging to my mother."

"All right, Miss Manson. I'll tell Mr. Mallison."

Bob went in and told the broker that a young lady named Manson was in the waiting-room, and that she wanted to sell some shares of railroad stock.

"Show her in," said Mr. Mallison.

Bob did so.

In about five minutes she came out of the private room and left the office.

Mr. Mallison's bell rang at that moment and Bob went in to see what he wanted.

"Take this note down to Mr. Megrim, of No. — Broad Street. You may have a small package to bring back," said the broker.

Bob put on his hat and left the office.

As he reached the main entrance he saw Miss Manson

just leaving the curb to cross the street.

She couldn't pass up the sidewalk toward Broadway, where she was apparently bound, because a large safe was being lifted to the sixth floor of the building next door, and the red danger signs were lying on the walk as a warning to pedestrians.

The heavy truck on which two burly men were working the windlass blocked up a part of the street, and a touring automobile standing on the opposite side made the passage for vehicles still narrower.

A small express wagon, such as are utilized to carry valuable packages, came dashing along down the street as the girl was crossing, and she sprang back just in time to save herself.

Bob saw that she looked frightened at her narrow escape, and hesitated after the wagon had gone by.

"I guess it's up to me to see her across," said the boy, stepping forward to tender his services.

Before he could reach her she continued her way.

Unfortunately, she did not notice that she was walking right in front of a cab that was coming down from Broadway.

The driver shouted at her.

She then saw her second danger and tried to avoid it as before.

This time she tripped and fell with a scream of fright.

Only that Bob was close beside her at the moment she would certainly have been run down and badly injured, if not killed.

He stooped, seized her in his arms and swung her out of harm's way just in the nick of time.

The girl's face was white as snow, and Bob thought she was about to faint.

"Brace up, Miss Manson," he whispered in her ear. "You're safe. I'll take you right across."

Mechanically the girl permitted him to lead her to the other sidewalk.

"There, now, you're all right," said Bob, reassuringly. She stood and looked at him in a dazed way.

She was trembling so much she could hardly stand, so he gave her the support of one of his arms.

"I'm so frightened," she fluttered.

"I don't wonder," replied the young messenger. "You had a narrow escape from that cab. However, a miss is as good as a mile."

"You saved my life," she said, grasping him by the arm and flashing a look of gratitude in his face. "I'm very, very grateful to you."

"You're quite welcome, Miss Manson,"

"You know my name!" she said in surprise. "I don't remember——"

"You don't remember me, eh? Well, I'm the boy who took your name in to Mr. Mallison when you were in his office a short time ago."

"Why, so you are," she answered with a faint smile of

recognition.

"I am very glad I was at hand to be of service to you, miss, and I hope I shall see you again," said Bob eagerly.

"Mamma will want to thank you for saving me from being run over. We live at No. — East 130th Street."

Bob took out his pencil and noted the address on one of his cuffs.

"Would you mind telling me your name?" she asked.

"My name is Bob Carson. I'm messenger for Littleby & Mallison."

"Thank you. I feel better now, and will not detain you longer. I thank you once more for what you did for me, and shall be very happy to have you call and see us if you care to do so."

"I shall be very glad to call, Miss Manson, and I thank you for the invitation."

He raised his hat to her politely and they separated.

#### CHAPTER VIII.

#### A MINING STOCK SWINDLE.

Bob hurried to make up for lost time, but his mind was engrossed with the fair girl whose life he had saved.

He was tickled to death to feel that he had rendered her so important a service, and that the opportunity was his to meet her again and improve the acquaintance.

Just why he was so much taken with Miss Manson he could not explain to himself, except that she was the loveliest girl he had ever met in his life.

In spite of her comparatively poor attire she was decidedly attractive in his eyes, and her apparent poverty rather appealed to his sympathy.

"She's a nice girl, and a good one, too, I'll swear to that," he said emphatically. "I mean to call on her and her mother in a day or two. They can't really be so very poor if they have railroad stock for sale. It strikes me they are people who have seen better days and come down in the world. At any rate, there is nothing common about Miss Manson. She acts very ladylike, indeed."

When Bob presented his note to Broker Megrim he was told to wait.

The trader went to his safe, took out some certificates of stock, wrapped them up and handed them to the boy.

"Give that package to Mr. Mallison," he said.

Bob carried it back with him to the office and handed it in to his employer.

Later on, when Bob came back from the bank where his firm kept their account, Mr. Mallison called him into his office.

"You can go home now, Bob," he said. "On your way uptown I want you to leave this package and this \$190 at the home of Mrs. John Manson, No. — East 130th Street. Here's a receipt for the money that you will request Mrs. Manson to sign. Understand?"

"Yes, sir," replied Bob, his heart bounding at the idea of calling so soon on the young lady and her mother.

"Tell Mrs. Manson that I made the best trade I could for her shares of D. & G.," said the broker. "Explain to her that I exchanged them for \$200 cash and 1,000 shares of Solid Silver mining stock at fifty cents a share. Tell her that she had better put the mining stock away, as it's likely to go to a dollar a share inside of six months. That will give her a profit of \$500 more than if I sold her ten shares of D. & G. for cash at the market. I only charged her \$10 commission on the whole transaction, which you can inform her is a very moderate fee for the service."

"All right, sir, I'll tell her what you have just said."

"You can impress the fact upon her that she has done extremely well with her stock, and that we always do the best we can for our customers."

"Yes, sir. I'll tell her that."

"That is all. You can go now."

Bob put the money in his trousers pocket and the package of stock in his jacket pocket and started uptown.

He got off the Third Avenue elevated at the 129th Street Station, and was soon ringing the bell of a cheap flat at No. — East 130th Street, where the Mansons lived.

He had to walk up four flights of stairs to reach the top

floor, and there he found the girl herself waiting at the turn of the balusters to see who was coming up.

"Why, Mr. Carson, is it you?" she exclaimed with a smile of welcome. "Wait till I go round and open the sitting-room door."

Bob waited and was presently ushered into a small and neatly furnished front room.

"I didn't expect to call so soon," explained Bob, "but Mr. Mallison asked me to stop here on my way home and leave some money and a package of mining stock for your mother."

"I'm sure we're ever so much obliged to you," said the girl. "Mamma will be in in a few minutes."

Bob talked with Miss Manson, whose other name was Ruby, until her mother came into the room.

"Mamma, this is Mr. Robert Carson, who saved me from being run over by a cab in Wall Street to-day," said Ruby.

Mrs. Manson, who was a cheerful little woman of perhaps forty years, expressed the gratitude she felt toward Bob for the priceless service he had rendered her child.

"That's all right, Mrs. Manson. I happened fortunately to be close behind your daughter at the time. I saw her peril and did the best I could to save her. Anybody else would no doubt have done the same thing. I don't think I did more than my duty under the circumstances."

After a short conversation Bob handed Mrs. Manson the package of stock and the \$190 in money, and delivered Mr. Mallison's verbal message.

"I don't know anything about this mining stock," said Mrs. Manson dubiously, "but if Mr. Mallison says it is worth \$500 now, and may be worth \$1,000 in six months, I suppose it's all right."

"How many shares of D. & G. did you sell through Mr. Mallison?" asked Bob.

"Ten shares, the market value of which the paper said was \$70 a share."

Bob hauled out the afternoon's stock report and looked up D. & G.

"It closed at 73 to-day," he said. "The opening price was 70. How came you to take only \$200 in money and the rest in mining stock, Miss Manson?"

"Mr. Mallison told me that the 1,000 shares of Solid Silver could be got at a great bargain, that is, fifty cents a share. He said it was worth \$1 a share, and would eventually be worth much more than that. He advised me to take it instead of \$500 in money if I did not actually want the cash right away," said Ruby Manson.

"Well, it isn't my place to make any comment on the subject, as I am working for Mr. Mallison, but there are only a few mining stocks that I'd care to invest any coin in. I never heard of Solid Silver, but it may be all that Mr. Mallison says it is. However, I mean to look it up tomorrow, and I'll let you know by letter what I have found out about it," said Bob.

"I shall be greatly obliged to you if you will," said Mrs. Manson. "If there is any likelihood of the stock being worth \$1 a share soon, of course it will be very satisfactory to us; but if we would have to hold it too long to make a profit I think I would prefer to have Mr. Mallison take it back and give me the \$500 in money instead."

Bob didn't say anything, but he had a suspicion in his

mind that Mr. Mallison had dumped the Solid Silver stock on the Mansons to get rid of it himself.

It didn't jibe with Mr. Mallison's reputation to sell a stock at fifty cents that in his opinion was worth \$1, and for which he could get \$1 in the near future.

Littleby & Mallison were not in the habit of doing business that way.

They were accustomed to look after No. One first, last and all the time.

Singleton wasn't the only customer who had complained of their sharp practices within Bob's knowledge, and the boy had every reason to believe that they never let a chance go by to feather their own nest, no matter at whose expense.

He had begun to take such an interest in the Mansons, particularly Miss Ruby, that he entertained a strong objection to their being defrauded in any way by the firm for whom he worked.

He knew that it would make him mad if he found out that Mr. Mallison had buncoed Mrs. Manson with the Solid Silver shares.

Whatever his suspicions were at the moment he was too prudent to express any opinion on the subject until he had obtained proof one way or the other.

So, after half an hour's pleasant conversation with Mrs. Manson and Ruby, he took his leave, promising to call again at an early date, and assuring Mrs. Manson that she should hear from him right away in relation to the mining stock.

Next morning he noticed to his satisfaction that his own D. & P. stock had gone up another point and was quoted at 82.

"That puts me \$1,000 ahead of the game so far," he told himself. "If it goes up eight points more I'll be well satisfied with the deal."

About noon he was sent on an errand to the Mills Building.

On his way back he stopped at the office of a well-known and reliable Curb broker and made inquiries about Solid Silver.

"That stock is little better than a wildcat," was the answer he got from the broker. "I can buy loads of it on the Street for 25 cents a share, but I don't consider it is worth the price. As a matter of fact, it's a drug on the market, in common with a score or more of similar stocks that have a fictitious valuation on the market report. If the party for whom you are seeking information has any of it for sale you may tell him from me that he'll find it a hard matter to dispose of it at any price. If he has an idea of buying any, just tell him to leave it alone, as well as any other mining stock in the same category. It is not a real producer. It is hardly more than a prospect as yet. The little ore the mine is shipping is of a low grade that barely pays for the handling. Until a mine is in a position to declare a dividend once in awhile I've got no use for it."

The broker made no bones about telling what he thought about the class of mining properties of which Solid Silver was a sample.

He said the Street was flooded with worthless, and next to worthless, mining stock, whose only excuse for existence was to catch suckers with.

"Speculators are locating mines every day almost in fore, a the silver belt of Nevada," he explained to Bob. "They are Street.

purely prospects at first, and most of them never get beyond that stage. Let one of these mines strike paying ore, and really amount to something, and every man or clique of men who has taken title to ground in the immediate vicinity will take advantage of the fact to boom their own properties. They'll issue glowing prospectuses telling how close they abut on the new producer, and how it stands to reason that if paying silver is being found 100, or 200, or even 500 feet from the boundary of their claims, the lode or vein must necessarily run through their mine as well. They print maps and diagrams purporting to prove this fact, but no real mining man is taken in by such specious reasoning—but plenty of fools at a distance are caught by the bait, and the speculators live and thrive on the money obtained from them."

"You say you can get all the shares of Solid Silver you want at 25 cents a share, and that, in your opinion, it isn't worth that?" said Bob.

The broker nodded.

"But a friend of mine paid 50 cents a share for some yesterday under the impression that that was its market value."

"Well, it was quoted at 50 cents for a few minutes yesterday," said the broker. "I haven't much doubt but the figure was reached by a series of wash sales, which is a common trick among some brokers when they want to establish a basis for a trade."

"I think it is a swindle to sell a person stock at a price far in advance of its salable value," said Bob indignantly, "and I think there ought to be a law to reach and punish persons doing it."

"It certainly is not at all regular," replied the broker; "but it's done right along, just the same, and I haven't

heard of anybody going to jail for doing it."

Bob thanked the broker for the information and returned to his office thoroughly disgusted with Mr. Mallison, and wondering how he could break the news to Mrs. Manson in a way that would not get him mixed up in the matter when the lady came to the office to put up a stiff kick, as she probably would as soon as she found that she had been victimized on the mining shares.

#### CHAPTER IX.

BOB IS DISCHARGED.

When he got back to the office Bob took a look at the tape and saw that D. & P. had taken a jump to 85.

During the day Bob discovered that there was a big demand in the Exchange for D. & P. shares.

The demand, however, was greater than the supply, and the price went up as usually happens in a case of that kind.

A bear movement was made against it in the afternoon, but had little effect in unsettling the value.

The stock kept right on going up, and closed at 89.

From all indications it looked as if the price would go well up in the nineties, so Bob decided not to sell yet awhile.

After thinking the mining stock matter over he decided not to commit himself in writing, but call on Mrs. Manson and tell her just what the Curb broker had told him.

Accordingly he got off the train at 129th Street, as before, and went over to the Manson flat on East 130th Street.

"I suppose I have surprised you again, Miss Manson," said Bob when he met the girl on the top floor landing, "but I have something to tell your mother about her mining stock that I didn't think I could explain fully by letter, at 98. so I took the liberty of calling instead of writing."

"You are very kind to take so much trouble, Mr. Car-

son," said Ruby.

"It is no trouble, I assure you. I am very glad to do you any little service I can."

Mrs. Manson greeted him in the sitting-room, and he

got down to business without delay.

"I consulted a well-known broker to-day, who is an authority on mining stock, and I regret to say his conclusions are not in your favor," began Bob.

Mrs. Manson looked disturbed and Ruby anxious.

"The Solid Silver stock is really not worth fifty cents a share, and would even be diffcult to sell at twenty-five cents. Although Mr. Mallison is my employer I am obliged to say that I don't think he has treated you fairly. Your daughter ought not to have allowed him to suggest the deal in question. He ought to have paid you cash for your D. & G. shares. Furthermore, I have found out that the shares were quoted at 72 in the market at the time your daughter was in the office, and they have not been lower since. They closed at 73 and to-day they are 74 1-8. By allowing you only the opening price of the day, which was 70, he took advantage of your daughter's lack of knowledge of Wall Street."

Mother and daughter were clearly much distressed by this information.

"What would you advise me to do?" asked Mrs. Manson. "Well, I think both you and your daughter ought to call at the office in the morning around eleven o'clock and see Mr. Mallison. Tell him what you have learned. I will give you the name and address of the Curb broker. You had better call on him first and verify my statements. You can tell him about the deal your daughter was persuaded to make with Mr. Mallison, and ask his advice. It would be advisable for you to do this in your own interest. You see, I don't want you to tell Mr. Mallison that I put you wise to the state of things, for that would get me in serious trouble with the firm, not that I care particularly whether I continue with them or not, but it would be better for me to leave them voluntarily than be discharged."

"Oh, I wouldn't mention your name for anything," said Mrs. Manson. "I will call on the broker you refer me to." "That's right. Here is his name and office address on Broad Street."

Bob then told them all the broker had said about cheap mining stocks, and how it was best to avoid buying such things.

"When you put it up to Mr. Mallison strong he may be induced to settle the matter by taking back the Solid Silver shares and giving you the money he charged you for them. I am rather surprised that he should take such advantage of you in so small a matter as \$500. Really, it wasn't worth the trouble."

Mrs. Manson thanked Bob for the interest he took in her affairs, and assured him that she looked upon him as a valued friend.

Bob then took his leave and went home.

Next morning there was excitement to burn in the Stock Exchange over D. & P.

A regular boom set in and by noon the stock was selling

Bob was out on an errand at the time and during his absence Mrs. Manson and Ruby called on Mr. Mallison.

They had previously visited the Curb broker and explained the situation to him.

He told Mrs. Manson point-blank that Mr. Mallison had defrauded her daughter by inducing her to accept the Solid Silver mining stock at fifty cents a share in place of the cash.

He told her he doubted if she would be able to get more than twenty cents a share for the stock at the outside.

Mr. Mallison received them in his private room, and after listening to Mrs. Manson's complaint put up a big defence and fairly bluffed them out of the matter, so that they had to retire without receiving any satisfaction.

Bob met them in the corridor as he was returning to the office and they told him about the unsatisfactory result of their interview with Mr. Mallison.

It happened that Walter Titus came along and heard a portion of the conversation, and he reported it to Mr. Mal-

The result was that when Bob entered the office the broker called him into his private room and asked him what he had been saying to Mrs. Manson and her daughter in the corridor.

When the boy declined to state what he had been talking about, on the ground that it was a personal matter, Mr. Mallison then stated what Titus had reported he had overheard, and accused Bob of acting against the interests of the firm.

"You told Mrs. Manson that I hadn't treated her right," seowled Mr. Mallison. "Do you deny that?"

"No, I don't deny it. If you think it is a fair deal to unload a bunch of comparatively worthless stock on a customer whose ignorance of the matter made her an easy mark, I don't," replied Bob boldly.

"How dare you criticize my actions? Take your hat and get out of the office. I won't have you around here another

minute, d'ye understand?"

"All right," replied Bob coolly. "I'm just as well pleased to leave as you are to have me go. I don't like your methods, anyway. I hear enough about them in the Street, and see more than I want to in the office. I've endeavored to do my duty to you and Mr. Littleby, and neither one of you can say that I haven't done the square thing by you. Therefore I shall be obliged to you to write me a letter of recommendation, as I think I deserve it."

"Write you-"

Mr. Mallison used an expression that wouldn't look well in print and smote the top of his desk with his fist in a great rage.

"Get out of here, you impertinent young jackanapes, or

I'll kick you out."

"I don't think it would be well for you to try and kick me out, Mr. Mallison, as I haven't done anything to deserve such treatment. Since you have discharged me I will go to the cashier and get what's coming to me, then I won't trouble you any more. It doesn't do a boy any good to work for a firm that has a reputation for sharp practice."

"You young puppy!" roared Mr. Mallison, springing

to his feet. "I've a great mind to—"

"What?" asked Bob, looking the angry man squarely in the eye with so resolute an expression that the broker hesitated.

"Get out!" he said snarlingly, turning and reseating himself at his desk.

"All right, sir. Good-afternoon," and Bob walked outside.

He went directly to the cashier and asked for what was

That gentleman was naturally surprised, and asked for an explanation.

"I've had a little scrap with Mr. Mallison, and he told

me to go, so I'm going."

"Oh, I guess he didn't mean it. Mr. Littleby thinks there isn't another messenger in the Street like you. Even if Mr. Mallison discharged you Mr. Littleby will counter-

"No, he won't," replied Bob. "I'm through with this office even if Mr. Littleby was to ask me to stay, which I think isn't likely. He couldn't very well overrule his partner's wishes."

"Well, wait a moment till I go in and see Mr. Mallison about it."

The cashier entered the private room and soon returned with orders to pay Bob his wages to Saturday and let

"I'm sorry you're going to leave us, Bob," said the cashier, as he handed the young messenger the money. "You're the best boy we've ever had."

"Thank you for the compliment, Mr. Haywood. We

shall remain good friends, I hope."

"Undoubtedly," replied the cashier, shaking him by the hand.

Bob then went into Nannie Bachelor's den.

"Good-bye, Nannie," he said. "I'm going to leave you."

"What's that?" replied the girl in surprise.

"I'm leaving the office," explained Bob.

"Leaving the office!"

"Yes. I had a run-in with Mr. Mallison just now and he fired me good and hard."

"You don't really mean that," she said incredulously.

"Yes, I do. There's my week's wages, and I am now a person of leisure."

"Why, Bob!"

"I don't mean to lose you altogether, Nannie. I'll be around Wall Street and I shall make it my business to see you occasionally. Give my regards to Miss Pratt and Miss Peters. Tell them that even the best friends must sometimes part, but that I will endeavor to see them when the opportunity offers."

"My gracious! So you are really going? I'm awfully

sorry."

"Surest thing you know of."

"Does Mr. Littleby know about it?"

"Not yet; but he'll learn about it when he comes back from the Exchange."

"I don't think he'll like the idea of you going away."

"Can't help it. Mr. Mallison has the right to bounce me if he wants to, though Mr. Littleby did hire me."

"What are you going to do? Look for another position?"

"Maybe. Or I might go in business for myself."

"Go into business for yourself? Where?"

"In Wall Street."

"As what?" asked Nannie in surprise.

"As a speculator on my own account."

"Why, the idea! Have you got money to speculate with?"

"Sure, I have. Wads of it," grinned Bob. "Can you keep a secret?"

"Of course."

"Most girls can't, but I'll trust you. Read that memorandum. It shows I've put up \$5,000 as margin for 500 shares of D. & P. at 80. Well, it was selling at 98 a little while ago. It may be at par now. If it is I can sell out at a profit of \$20 a share, or \$10,000. At that rate I don't have to worry about hustling for another job."

"My goodness! Who would have thought you were worth

all that money?"

"I made most of it in the market since I've been working for this firm."

"Is that really so?"

"Yes, it's really so."

At that moment Titus appeared with a paper for the stenographer to copy.

He looked at Bob with an air of triumphant satisfaction.

"You got the bounce, did you?" he chuckled. "It isn't more than you deserve. I reckon you won't get another job down here in a hurry. You'd better take a glide now. I've got business with Miss Bachelor."

"Do you want to know what I think of you?" said Bob. "You're a sneak and a tale-bearer. You overheard a few words I said to two people in the corridor and you reported it to Mr. Mallison. You think yourself a man, but you aren't half of one. You are nothing but a contemptible

"How dare you talk to me that way?" demnaded Titus, furiously.

"Because you deserve it. Everybody in the office knows what you are, and they have as little to do with you as

"You insulting puppy, get out of here!" and Titus grabbed Bob by the arm, intending to put him out of the counting-room.

Bob was only waiting for an excuse to get back at his enemy.

He snatched his arm away from the margin clerk's grasp and gave him a punch in the jaw that set his teeth rattling like a pair of castanets.

· Then he said good-bye to the stenographer and walked out of the office.

#### CHAPTER X.

#### BOB OPENS AN OFFICE.

Bob went directly to the Stock Exchange and spent the rest of the afternoon up to three o'clock watching the brokers on the floor.

The chief excitement was around D. & P., which advanced steadily to 102, at which figure it closed for the day.

"I'm about \$11,000 ahead on the deal so far," Bob said to himself, as he left the Exchange and walked to a lunchhouse. "I guess I'd better sell out before a slump sets in, for it strikes me this figure can't be maintained very long."

"Hello, Bob, how's Littleby & Mallison?" asked a messenger named Joe Ferris, who came in and took a seat beside him.

"They seem to be in good health," replied Bob.

"I wouldn't want to work for them," said Ferris. "They've got a fierce reputation. It's a wonder you wouldn't try to cut loose from them."

"I have."

"You have!" exclaimed the boy. "When did you leave them?"

"About two hours ago."

"What, in the middle of the week? Got another job?"

"Then how came you to quit so suddenly? Any trouble?"

"Yes. I told Mallison that he didn't treat a certain customer right, and he got mad as a hornet and bounced me."

"Oh, well, you'll get another position somewhere in the Street if you look around for it. I'd just as soon do nothing as work for Littleby & Mallison. I don't see how you stood it so long."

"Littleby always treated me well, and I liked all the people in the office except Walter Titus, the margin clerk. He was the cause of my discharge, and I gave him a good slug in the jaw before I got out to pay him for it."

"And what did he do to you?"

"Nothing. He's like all sneaks—a coward."

The boys continued to converse until they had finished their lunch, and then they parted.

Bob said nothing to his aunt when he got home about the trouble he had had at the office, and next morning he went down to Wall Street as usual.

He met Nannie Bachelor at the corner of Broadway and walked with her down to the office.

He went up with her on the elevator and left her at the door.

On his way back to the elevator he met the janitor of the building, with whom he was on friendly terms.

"Hello, Mooney!" he said. "Fine morning, isn't it?"

"Faith, it is," replied Mooney.

"Got any offices to rent in the building?"

"I have a suite of three on the nixt floor, thot's spoken for, I belave, and a small one on this floor. Maybe you'd like to rint the small one?" grinned the man.

"I would if the price was right."

"The price is right enough for thim that can afford to pay it."

"How much is it?"

Mooney told him.

"Can I see it?"

"See it, faith! What for?" "I'm thinking of hiring it."

"It's a foine jolly you are givin' me."

"No jolly at all. I want to rent a small office somewhere in Wall Street, and I'd rather get it here than in any other building."

"G'wan now with your kiddin'!"

"Don't you believe me?"

"Sure, I don't. What would you want with an office? You're missinger for Littleby & Mallison."

"Faith, you were yisterday, for I seen you in their office." to lose just because you happened to forget yourself and

"I left them yesterday afternoon."

"What was the trouble?"

"Mallison and I had a scrap."

"Is that so. And are you lookin' for another job?"

"No, I'm looking for an office."

"What for?"

"To go into business."

"What business?"

"Stock brokerage."

"Go on, now! You are makin' game of me, so you are."

"No, I'm not, Mooney. Do you suppose the agent will rent me the office if I ask him?"

"I have me doubts."

"Let me see it, anyway, will you?"

"All right. Come along and I'll give you a glimpse." The janitor opened the door of the vacant room, and Bob

decided that it would suit him all right. "I'll see the agent about it," he said.

"I'm afraid you'll only be after wastin' your time. The offices are only rinted to responsible people."

"Isn't my money as good as anybody's?"

"Sure, it is! but bein' a b'y you ain't responsible."

"You lease the offices from May to May, don't you?"

"Sure, we do."

"If I put up five months' rent in advance can't I get the room up to next May?"

"Have you got so much money?" asked the janitor in-

credulously.

"I may have enough to buy the building for all you

"You might, if somebody lift you a fortune."

"Well, so long, I'll see you again."

Bob went around to the little bank on Nassau Street and ordered his 500 shares of D. & P. sold at the opening of the market.

He waited at the bank until he got word that the sale had been put through at 103 1-2.

That gave him a net profit of \$11,500, and raised his capital to over \$16,000.

He drew a small amount on account and went around to see the agent of the building about the office.

The agent laughed at him at first, but when Bob pulled out his roll and offered to pay five months' rent in advance the man asked him what he wanted the office for.

Bob told him how he proposed to utilize the office.

Finally the agent said he could have it till the first of next May on the terms he offered.

Bob then said that he thought he ought to be entitled to interest on the money he advanced as security.

The agent agreed to allow him the current rate of interest, and so Bob got the office, and started out at once to have it furnished up to suit his fancy.

As he was going out of the front entrance he ran against Littleby.

His late employer seized him by the arm and dragged him to one side.

"You had trouble with Mr. Mallison yesterday and he discharged you."

"Yes, sir."

"Well, I've fixed the matter up so that you can come "I'm not working for Littleby & Mallison at present." back. I told Mallison that you were too good a messenger say some things you ought not to have done. Come right upstairs and take your seat in the waiting-room."

"Sorry, Mr. Littleby, but now that I'm out, I'm out for

good."

"Do you mean to say that you don't want to come back?"

"That's about the size of it, sir." The broker looked disappointed.

"Have you got another position in view?"

"No, sir. I'm not going to take another position. I've hired an office on your floor and I'm going in business for myself."

"Going in business for yourself!" almost gasped Littleby.

"Yes, sir."

"What kind of business?"

"I'm going to speculate in stocks on my own account, and for anybody else's account that wants me to do business for them."

"Great Cæsar! Why, you're only, a boy!"

"No use of my trying to deny that fact."

"Where do you expect to get the money with which to speculate?"

"I've got a few dollars to begin with."

"And you've actually hired an office on the sixth floor?"

"I have."

Littleby looked searchingly at his late messenger.

He began to suspect that there was something behind this move of Bob's.

Somebody must be backing the boy and using him as a blind to cover operations of a secret nature, for in his opinion it was preposterous that his late office boy could open an office on his own account.

He determined to ferret the matter out.

There might be a good thing in it for him and Mallison. The only way he could succeed was by keeping on friendly terms with Bob.

So he wished him success in his new venture, and told him if he could be of any service to him to let him know.

"Thank you, Mr. Littleby, you are very kind," said Bob, privately wondering at the broker's friendly attitude.

Littleby then took the elevator upstairs, while the boy started off to hunt up an office furnishing store.

The necessary furniture was delivered late that afternoon, and next morning a painter came and was soon busy putting on the frosted glass panel of the door:

#### ROBERT CARSON. Stocks and Bonds.

While he was at work Walter Titus passed along the corridor, and stopped to see who the new tenant was.

"Robert Carson," he muttered. "I wonder if that is any relative of Bob Carson, our late messenger?"

"How do you like the sign, Mr. Talebearer?" said a voice and offering to help me all he could." behind him.

He swung around and found himself face to face with

"If you think that you injured me by having me discharged from the office you're just as mistaken as if you'd lost your suspenders. Mr. Littleby wanted me to come back, but as I'm going into business on my own hook I had to refuse. Maybe I'll want an office boy by and by. If I do I'll keep you in mind."

own office, while Bob chuckled to himself and entered his

#### CHAPTER XI.

NANNIE BACHELOR AND HER TWO FRIENDS LUNCH WITH BOB IN HIS OFFICE.

When Fred Barton, Littleby & Mallison's junior clerk, went to lunch he saw the newly-painted sign on the door of Bob's office.

"Robert Carson!" he exclaimed, stopping short and looking at it. "I wonder-"

At that moment the door opened and Bob came out.

"Hello, Barton!" cried Bob. "Step in and take a look at my office."

"Your office!" ejaculated the junior clerk.

"Sure thing," laughed Bob. "Don't you see my name on the door?"

"But that isn't your name."

"Isn't it? Well, I had an idea that it was, seeing that I paid a sign painter for putting it there."

Barton allowed Bob to usher him into the room, which was fitted up in a way that looked like business.

"Say, Bob, what does this mean?" asked the junior clerk with a puzzled look.

"It means I've gone into business. Isn't that clear enough from the sign?"

"But you're only a boy. How can you expect to do any business in stocks and bonds? What do you know about stocks and bonds, anyway?"

"Oh, I know a whole lot."

"Why, you were messenger at our place less than six months, and you couldn't have learned much about the brokerage business in that time."

"I was three years in Bates, Munyon & Co.'s office in Boston, and I wasn't messenger all that time, either. For six months I held down a tall stool at one of the desks, and I learned a whole lot about the stock brokerage business."

"This is the first I've heard of that. How came you to take up with the messenger business again?"

"I couldn't pick up anything better in this town when I came here, so I took hold at that line again, hoping to work myself up."

"I heard Littleby wanted you to come back," said Bar-

"He did. I met him in the corridor downstairs and he told me that he had fixed things up with Mallison so I could return, but I told him that I had decided to become my own boss for the future."

"He must have thought you crazy."

"He looked surprised, but wound up by wishing me luck

"The dickens he did! Did you tell him that you had money?"

"I told him that I had a few dollars."

"You must have something, that's sure, else you couldn't hire an office in this building and furnish it in bang-up style. Did you get a legacy lately?"

"No. All the money I've got I made myself."

"I suppose you saved most of your wages in Boston."

"No. I never made enough to save a great deal. Still Titus cast a venomous look at Bob and hurried to his I managed to save enough to speculate on the Boston market, and when I came here I had a few hundred dollars in my clothes."

"A few hundred isn't much to open an office on."

"Oh, I made a few hundred more speculating while I was carrying messages for Littleby & Mallison."

"That so? You never told me anything about it before."

"It isn't a good idea to tell everything you know in this world, even to your best friend. A still tongue they say is a good business asset."

"I guess you're right, Bob," admitted Barton; "but I don't see how you expect to do any business in Wall Street

at your age."

"It will take time to get established, but I guess I can

afford to wait for things to come to the front."

"Well, I hope you'll get along, Bob," said the junior clerk in a tone that had a doubtful ring to it. "The people in our office will be paralyzed when they learn you have branched out as a full-fledged broker. Titus will say he sees your finish, but the rest, including Miss Bachelor, will be glad to see you get on."

"I saw Titus this morning. He was standing looking at my sign when I came up. I asked him how he liked it, and told him as I expected to hire an office boy soon I would

keep him in mind for the job."

Barton laughed heartily.

"That was a rough dig at him, Bob," he said.

"Not rougher than he deserves from me."

"Well, I must be getting to my lunch," said the junior clerk.

"I'll go along with you," said Bob.

About half-past three that day Littleby dropped in at Bob's office and took in the surroundings with a critical eye.

He was more than ever satisfied that some broker was backing the boy for a purpose, and he was anxious to learn what that purpose might be.

He chatted in a friendly way with the young broker, endeavoring to pump him, but he couldn't find out anything

more than that Bob was simply out for himself.

"He's pretty sharp," muttered Littleby after he had taken his leave. "Won't let the secret get away from him. However, I'll keep my eye on him, and Mallison will, too. It will be a cold day if we don't get to the bottom of the scheme, whatever it is."

Bob knew that Miss Bachelor left her office a little before five as a rule, so he stood in the corridor till she came along.

"I want to show you my office, Nannie," he said.

"Dear me, so you've actually opened an office, Bob."

"I have."

"That's what Mr. Barton told all of us this afternoon when he got back from his lunch. He said you had a fine little office all ready for business."

"So I have. Step right in and look at it," said Bob,

unlocking and throwing his door open.

"You have got a nice office," the girl said, as she looked around. "You are certainly an ambitious boy. By the way, how did you come out on that stock deal you were telling me about when Mr. Titus interrupted you?"

"I cleared \$11,500 on it."

"Gracious! As much as that?"

"Yes."

"I'm glad to hear it."

"Thank you, Nannie. I know I always have your best wishes. Say, can't you bring Miss Peters and Miss Price in here to-morrow at lunch time? We'll take our lunch in here. I'll have a little spread brought up from the lunchhouse on Pine Street if you girls will honor me with your company. What do you say?"

"I'll ask them to come."

"That's right. I'll look for you between twelve and one."
Bob then escorted Nannie as far as the Brooklyn Bridge entrance, where he put her aboard a car bound for Brooklyn.

Next morning Bob read in the papers that the report was current on good authority that the M. & C. road had been consolidated with the M. & N.

The young broker took notice at once.

Some months before he had seen a paragraph in a financial paper, whose sources of information were considered reliable, that the M. & C. road was in difficulty, and that the only way it could escape getting into the hands of a receiver was to make a deal with the M. & N. line.

Bob had tried to keep track of the matter, for the stock of the M. & C. was dropping lower in the market all the time, and he knew if such a deal was put through the M. & C. stock would take on a boom.

From time to time he saw notices about the M. & C. road stating that negotiations were said to be under way looking to a consolidation with the M. & N., but one thing or another blocked the deal.

On the day that he severed his connection with Littleby & Mallison, Bob saw a small pargraph which intimated that the consolidation was looked upon in many quarters as an assured fact in the near future.

While in the gallery of the Stock Exchange the day before he had noticed a well-known broker buying all the M. & C. shares offered him.

This had set him thinking, and he had about decided to buy 1,000 shares himself on the chance that something would come of it when he saw the story in the morning paper.

"If M. & C. doesn't go up to-day on the strength of that I'll be much mistaken. I'm going to take a long chance, at

any rate, that it does go up."

So he went to the little bank and ordered the margin clerk to buy 1,500 shares of M. & C. for his account.

He handed in his certificate of deposit for \$16,000 to cover the margin on the deal, receiving \$1,000 cash back which he put in his safe as soon as he reached his office.

M. & C. had once been as high as 65, but it was now

going at 40.

"If the bank can get those shares and the consolidation turns out to be a fact I'll bet I'll clear over \$25,000," Bob said to himself.

Although much excited over the prospect of making a good haul, he did not forget to order a nice lunch to be sent to his office at half-past twelve.

It was all ready and waiting when Nannie Bachelor and her two friends walked in with their lunch packages in their hands, Miss Nannie carrying the hot teapor and the other two girls the cups and saucers.

"Hello, girls!" greeted Bob. "Make yourselves at home."
"Oh, my, haven't you a swell little office!" exclaimed

Miss Peters and Miss Pratt in a breath.

"You needn't have brought your lunches, young ladies," said Bob. "I told Miss Nannie that I would order a spread from a Pine Street lunch-house, and there it is waiting for you to pitch in and eat it."

"We thought you meant that we were to dine on the same old plan we used to do in Nannie's den," cried Miss Pratt.

"Not at all. Just leave your packages on top of my desk. Here is a plate for each of you. Help yourself to whatever you see. There are chicken, ham and sardine sandwiches. Take your choice."

"My, what a fine lunch!" cried Miss Peters, her mouth watering at the display. "You're the nicest boy in the

world."

"Thanks, and you are one of the nicest girls in New York."

Miss Peters giggled and the other two laughed.

"Here's a paper napkin for each of you."

"Isn't this too nice for anything," cried Miss Pratt, flashing a bewitching look at the young broker. "So you are actually in business for yourself, Mr. Carson."

"Looks like it, doesn't it?"

"No doubt of that. You look all ready for business."

"I am. Haven't you got a few thousands you'd like to speculate with?"

"I wish I had. These sandwiches melt in one's mouth."

"I'm glad they hit your palate," smiled Bob. "Don't eat too many or you won't have room for that apple pie or a slice of angel cake."

"Angel cake!" cried Nannie.

"Sure. Here it is," said Bob, uncovering three slices. "I never eat it myself. It's too sweet, something like you girls."

"Oh!" chorused Miss Peters and Miss Pratt.

The lunch proved to be a great success, and Bob declared that they must eat with him again in the near future, whereat the girls laughed and said they would be delighted, with an accent on the "de."

#### CHAPTER XII.

BOB MAKES A BIG STAKE OUT OF M. & C.

After the girls left his office Bob walked over to the little bank to find out if the M. & C. had been purchased for him.

Finding that it had, and was held by the bank subject to his order, he went on to the Exchange and was soon in the visitors' gallery looking down on the stirring scene on the floor below.

The big broker was still buying M. & C. stock around that road's pole, and Bob was satisfied there would be something doing before long.

He noticed that the price of the stock had gone up five points since morning, for the newspaper story had created something of a demand for it, and many brokers bought the stock for private speculation.

It went up another point while he was in the gallery and closed at 46, thereby putting Bob about \$9,000 ahead on the deal within a few hours.

"This is what I call making money. I've been pretty lucky in Wall Street since I came here, and now that I'm out for myself I stand a show of making my fortune in the course of time," said Bob in great glee, as he left the Exchange and went back to his office.

He remained there until four o'clock reading the financial papers he had subscribed for, and then went home.

Next morning he was down at nine o'clock, and busied himself with the daily market report and the morning papers until the Exchange opened, when he took his place in the gallery once more.

The morning papers printed a lot about the excitement over M. & C. the previous day at the Exchange, and they said that while the consolidation had not been confirmed officially there seemed to be little doubt that it was an accomplished fact.

The brokers seemed to view the matter in the same light, for they got busy around the M. & C. pole just as soon as business opened for the day.

A great many shares of the stock exchanged hands, but still the supply was not at all equal to the demand, and the bidding for it rushed the price up to 52 by noon.

There it stopped for awhile, for the more level-headed traders were not yet sure in their own minds about the reality of the consolidation.

At three o'clock Bob returned to his office and figured up his profit in sight.

It amounted to something over \$17,000.

The evening papers that catered to Wall Street interests devoted considerable space to the advance in the value of M. & C., and they said there seemed to be no doubt about the consolidation, as the officials of the M. & N. road, when approached on the subject, refused either to confirm or deny it.

Bob didn't know that he had been followed to the Exchange that day by Walter Titus, acting under orders from Littleby, and to keep tab on his movements.

Titus reported that the young broker remained in the gallery of the Exchange watching the brokers.

"Was that all he did?" asked Littleby.
"Yes, sir," replied the margin clerk.

Next morning Titus followed Bob again.

The young broker gave his whole attention to M. & C., and by noon it had slowly advanced to 54.

Then the official announcement of the consolidation was made and great excitement ensued among the traders on the floor.

Inside of fifteen minutes M. & C. stock was bid up to £5. After watching Bob for nearly two hours, Titus came to the conclusion that the boy was merely killing time in the gallery of the Exchange, so he returned to the office and reported his opinion to Mallison.

At two o'clock M. & C. was the center of the greatest excitement of the season, and had reached 70 3-8.

Bob decided that it wouldn't go much higher, and believed that the moment the excitement subsided the price would drop back in the sixties.

"Thirty dollars a share profit is good enough for me," he said to himself. "Any one who wants to may hold out for the last dollar, but I'm afraid to take those kind of chances. I'm not going to spoil a good thing by getting hoggish over it."

Accordingly he walked around to the little bank and ordered his stock sold.

It went like hot cakes, and next day when the bank settled with him he drew \$45,000 in profit on the deal which his shrewdness had got him into. He was now worth \$61,000 and he felt pretty independent.

Littleby dropped in to see him that afternoon.

"Doing anything, Bob?" he asked curiously.

"Oh, yes, I manage to keep busy."

"I heard you spend your time in the Exchange gallery."

"Well, I might spend it in a great deal worse place," replied Bob.

"That's true, but there is no money to be made merely looking down at the brokers," said Littleby.

"That depends."

"On what?"

"Whether you're interested in what's going on."

"I don't quite catch your meaning."

"I mean if you're long on a stock that's going up you can be making money at the same time that you're watching the traders."

"Are you long on the market at present?"

"I was, but I sold out yesterday at a good profit that will pay my expenses for some time to come."

"What stock was it you were interested in?"

"M. & C."

"How did you come to get in on that?"

"By keeping track of the situation ever since the first suggestion of a consolidation was printed in the papers about four months ago."

Littleby looked at his late messenger in some astonishment.

"Do you mean to say that you've been watching M. & C. all that time?"

"Yes, sir."

"Did you speculate any while you were with us?"

"I did."

"You must have money."

"I have enough to keep the pot boiling."

"Look here, Bob, you're a kind of mystery to me. Are you working for yourself or for somebody else?"

"I'm working for myself. I haven't met any one yet

who wants me to do business for them."

When Littleby returned to his own office he told Mallison that he guessed Bob was really out for himself and not, as they had supposed, for some other trader.

"The boy has evidently got money. He as much as admitted that he made a good haul out of M. & C. I think it will pay us to work him for his little stock of fleece. All is fish that comes to our net, Mallison."

A day or two afterward Fred Barton, the junior clerk at Littleby & Mallison's, dropped in to see Bob.

"Say, Bob, you want to keep your eyes skinned."

"For what?"

"Littleby and Mallison."

"How so?"

"They're out after your doughbag."

"That so? How did you learn that?"

"I heard them talking in the wash-room this morning about how they intended to do you."

"Very kind of them, I'm sure. So they're going to do me if they can."

"That's their intention."

"Any idea of the scheme they think of working?"

"No. They didn't speak about that."

"Well, I'm much obliged for the tip, Fred."

"You're welcome. I thought I'd put you on your guard." After the junior clerk had gone away Bob sat back in his chair and wondered how Littleby & Mallison proposed to get the better of him.

"I'd like to give them a taste of their own medicine," mused the boy. "More than one broker has tried to get back at them, but few have ever succeeded. They're about as foxy as any two men in New York."

That afternoon Bob ordered a Pearl Street carpenter to make a small solid oblong box, with a plain lock to it.

He had it stained and varnished the color of mahogany. Then he secured a number of bags, such as are used to hold specimens of gold or silver ore, and he had these bags filled with small chunks of anthracite coal.

He got a couple of bags of rich gold ore from the assay office by depositing as security their actual value in money.

These bags he marked for identification and placed among the coal bags in the top layer of the box.

The box was inscribed "Gold Ore," in big letters, and in small ones underneath were painted, "From the Solid Silver Mine, Jasmine County, Nevada."

He placed the box in a prominent place on the floor and against one of the walls of his office where it would at once attract the notice of a visitor.

About this time he called at the Manson flat on West 130th Street.

He received a warm welcome from Ruby and her mother. "I've made a change since I saw you last," he said to them. "The day you called on Mr. Mallison I had a run-in with him about the way he had treated you, and he discharged me from his office."

Both Mrs. Manson and Ruby seemed much concerned, and said they deeply regretted that they had been the inadvertent cause of his losing his situation.

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"Don't you worry about that," laughed Bob. "I intended to leave Littleby & Mallison sooner or later, as I didn't care much to work for such shifty brokers. I am now in business for myself."

"In business for yourself!" exclaimed Ruby, in some surprise.

"Yes, and I want you and your mother to come down and visit me. Here is my card. I am in the same building and on the same floor with Littleby & Mallison."

They said they would be glad to call some time.

"Come down Saturday about one o'clock, will you, and I'll take you out to lunch," said Bob.

After some hesitation Mrs. Manson said that if nothing prevented they would call at the time stated.

"Very good. I'll look for you. Now, I want you to let me have those 1,000 shares of Solid Silver stock that Mr. Mallison worked off on you at fifty cents a share. I'm going to try and sell it back to them if I can at \$1 a share. I've got a scheme that may catch them. It may not go through, but it's worth trying."

"I shall be glad to get my money back if I can," replied Mrs. Manson. "Has the price gone up?"

"It's quoted at 37 cents, but I don't believe I could sell it on the curb for more than 25 or 30 cents."

"Then how do you expect to get a dollar for it?"

"By working a litle bit of sharp practice on Littleby & Mallison—giving them a dose of their own medicine. It's something I'don't believe in, but in their case I think it's

excusable, for they surely swindled you with the stock, and it is fair to get back at them in any way that offers."

Mrs. Manson got the stock and handed it to Bob, and he carried it away with him, promising to do the best he could in her interest.

#### CHAPTER XIII.

#### TRIMMING THE BROKERS.

Bob carried Mrs. Manson's shares of Solid Silver mining stock to his office and locked them up in his safe.

Then he went down to the Curb market and began to look for more of the stock.

He gradually accumulated 10,000 shares at an average price of 25 cents.

When he had secured all that appeared to be in sight he started around among offices of the Curb brokers and picked up 10,000 more shares at the same price.

He had now in his possession pretty near all the stock of the mine in New York.

Next morning he went to Jersey City and bought 5,000 shares there, all he could find, at the same price.

When he came back to New York he invited the subeditor of a certain Wall Street daily to his office to see some valuable specimens of gold ore he had received from the

When the newspaper man called, Bob opened his mahogany stained box and selecting a couple of bags apparently at random opened them and submitted their contents to his visitor for examination.

The sub-editor pronounced the specimens to be very rich in gold ore.

When he returned to his office he wrote up a paragraph about them and it was printed next morning.

Before ten o'clock Bob had half a dozen Curb brokers in his office looking at the specimens, which they declared to be fine.

The result was a rush was made by these traders to buy up Solid Silver stock.

Hardly any of it came to the surface, and the bidding became so spirited that by noon as high as 60 a share was offered for Solid Silver stock.

Telegrams were sent out to Nevada for further information, and it happened that one of these inquiries reached the brokers in Goldfield who were exploiting Solid Silver for the company.

The firm didn't know what the thing meant and hastily communicated with the manager of the mine.

The manager was as much at sea as anybody else over the mysterious rise of Solid Silver on the New York Curb, and judged that some enterprising traders had cornered the supply in the East and were working a boom.

At any rate he saw a chance for the mine to participate in the boom, and so he telegraphed to the principal news agencies that a big strike of fabulously rich gold ore had been made in the mine, and he instructed the mine's brokers to boom it on the Goldfield market.

A great deal of excitement began to center around Solid Silver in Goldfield, and the stock began to bound upward.

As a natural consequence the San Francisco and other mining exchanges were similarly affected, and Solid Silver ton, as he looked the certificates over. was boosted all around.

The news of this was telegraphed to New York and by three o'clock the stock was quoted on the Curb at 90 cents a share.

Bob, uncertain whether his scheme would succeed or not, determined to take advantage of that figure in Mrs. Manson's favor and he sold her 1,000 shares at 90 cents, thus getting her \$500 back and giving her a profit over Littleby & Mallison's skin game of nearly \$400.

"There, now, that will make her happy, no matter how I may come out. I may lose \$4,000 or \$5,000, if my scheme fails, but I've fixed Mrs. Manson in good shape," he told himself. "She and Ruby will be grateful to me, and it may make me solid with the girl, though I stand pretty well with her, anyway, after saving her life."

About half-past three Littleby walked into Bob's office.

"What's this report in the 'News' about a box of rich specimens of ore from the Solid Silver mine that you have on exhibition? Is that it yonder?"

"Want to see them?" asked Bob.

"Certainly," replied the broker. "Is it true about that rich strike of gold ore reported as made at the mine?"

"I couldn't tell you that, Mr. Littleby. I'll show you the gold ore I have on exhibition."

Bob pulled the box over, opened it, took out the two bags of gold ore and removing the string from them dumped out their contents.

"There, feast your eyes on that and tell me what you think of it."

Littleby examined them carefully and was satisfied that they would assay very high.

"Where did you get all this ore, Bob?" he asked.

"That's a secret, Mr. Littleby."

"Are you interested in the Solid Silver mine now?"

"To a certain extent I am. I've got a few shares of the stock for sale."

"What are you asking for it?"

"One dollar."

"Why, it closed at 90 cents a little while ago!"

"I know that, but I expect to see it go up to-morrow to over \$1."

"How many shares have you for sale?"

"Any part of 25,000."

"You are selling them for the company, I suppose?"

"No. I'm offering them on my own account, as they belong to me."

"Well, I'll take the bunch at \$1."

"All right. Make out your check and I'll deliver you the shares at once."

"I'll send it right down to you," said Littleby. "I'll take a few of these specimens, if you don't mind, to show Mallison."

"Help yourself," replied Bob.

Littleby seized a handful and dropped them in his pocket. In a few minutes Fred Barton, the junior clerk, came in with Littleby & Mallison's check for \$25,000.

"Littleby sent me in with this check and told me to bring back 25,000 shares of Solid Silver mining stock, Bob."

"That's right. Here are the certificates. See that they're all O. K."

"You seem to be doing some business, Bob," said Bar-

"Yes, a little. I like to deal with easy marks."

"Who do you call easy marks?"

"Well, Littleby & Mallison are pretty easy after all, but sternation. I hope you won't tell them I said so," laughed Bob.

"Sure, not, but it's the first time I ever heard them called easy. They are usually quite the opposite."

"I know they are; but the shrewdest men sometimes overreach themselves."

About ten minutes later Barton came in again, just as Bob was preparing to go home.

"Here's a note for you, Bob, from Littleby, but I want to warn you that there's some trick behind it."

"Some trick?"

"Yes."

"Any idea what it is?"

"It's connected with that box of specimens. Read the note and see what it says."

Bob did so.

It ran as follows:

"Bob Carson: Drop over to the office for a couple of minutes. "LITTLEBY."

"While you're over there Titus will be sent over here to get away with the contents of that box," said the junior clerk.

"Is that their game?"

"I overheard them fixing it up."

"Then I'll lay a trap for Titus. Go back and tell Littleby that I've just stepped into Green's office next door on a small matter of business, and that he may look for me in five minutes. If he should ask you if I locked up my office you can tell him that I did not."

"All right," said Barton, walking away.

The moment the door closed behind the junior clerk Bob hauled the box of alleged specimens into the center of the room, took out the two bags of gold ore, shut the cover of the box, but left the key in the lock.

Then the young broker opened the folding doors of the upper half of the combination bookcase, revealing an empty space.

He tossed the two bags in, followed himself and closed the doors.

The office was now apparently without an occupant. Within a minute the door of the room was cautiously

opened and Littleby looked in. Seeing that the room was vacant he stepped in, followed by Mallison, who carried a satchel in his hand.

"Quick!" said Littleby. "Now's our chance, provided we can break open the box. By George! The key is in the lock. Was there ever such luck! Open the satchel and we'll dump the bags into it."

Littleby knelt beside the box and flung open the cover.

"Now, then, get a hustle on, Mallison," he said.

They commenced to throw the bags into the valise when Mallison said:

"They seem plaguey light for ore specimens."

"So they do," said Littleby, weighing one in his hand. He tore open the mouth of the bag and looked inside.

"Why, this is nothing but coal!" he roared, throwing it on the floor in disgust.

Mallison opened the one he held and made the same discovery.

"What in thunder does this mean?" he gasped, in con-

As the pair of rascally brokers uttered exclamations of rage at the discovery that the bags contained coal instead of golden nuggets, Bob Carson banged open the doors of the bookcase and confronted them with a grin on his face.

#### CHAPTER XIV.

#### IN WHICH BOB COMES OUT AHEAD.

. At that moment a Curb broker named Flint entered the room and was a witness to the discomfiture of the two traders.

"How do the specimens of ore strike you, gentlemen?" laughed Bob, enjoying the consternation of his late em-

"Confound you, Carson! What kind of a game is this?"

roared Littleby angrily.

"What do you mean, Mr. Littleby?" asked the boy

"What do you mean by palming off coal for golden nug-

"I beg your pardon, I didn't palm off coal for gold nuggets."

"Yes, you did. You told me these bags were filled with gold quartz."

"You're mistaken, I showed you two bags filled with quartz and asked you what you thought of the ore. I made no reference to those other bags."

"This is a put-up job on us, and we'll make you smart for it."

"Excuse me, Mr. Littleby, but will you tell me by what right you and Mr. Mallison presumed to sneak into my office when you thought I was out, open that box, which is my private property, and proceed to steal those bags under the impression that they contained rich quartz? I think if anybody is in danger of smarting for an underhand piece of business it is you two, so I wouldn't be too hasty about threatening other people," said Bob coolly.

"How dare you accuse us of trying to steal anything?"

snorted Mallison.

"I dare accuse you because the evidence against you is plain. You've got half a dozen of the bags in that valise you brought in, which shows pretty conclusively what your object was in coming to my office. Own up like men that I've caught you with the goods and I'll let the matter drop; otherwise you may run against a whole peck of trouble. You know what your reputation in the Street is. If this thing gets out, and Mr. Flint here is an accidental witness of your underhand proceedings, it will give you a black eye in earnest. If you take my advice you'll withdraw to your office with your satchel and take your set-back quietly. In consideration of the fact that I was some time in your employ I won't say a word about the matter, and probably Mr. Flint will also agree to keep mum if he is asked to."

The two brokers looked and felt like thirty cents, to use

a common expression.

They had been fairly caught at a rascally trick, and there was no loophole handy through which they could evade the responsibility of their actions.

They knew only too well that their reputations on the Street were not any too sweet, and that if their attempt to

loot the box of alleged gold specimens got abroad they would be generally shunned by their business associates.

Bob's caustic words riled them greatly.

It would have given them a whole lot of satisfaction if they could have choked him then and there.

He had them where the hair was short, and the only thing left for the foxy gentlemen was to retire from the scene of their discomfiture as gracefully as they could.

Littleby turned to Flint.

"This is all a mistake, Flint," he said. "Carson here has just been playing a trick upon us and he's trying to make all the capital he can out of it, like a boy will, you know, when he catches his elders at a disadvantage. I hope you won't say anything about what you've seen, for it would make us look kind of small. I am bound to admit that Carson has got the better of us on this occasion, and though it goes against our grain to admit defeat at the hands of a boy who was formerly our messenger, I don't see how we can help ourselves. Come on, Mallison, dump out those bags of black diamonds, and we'll get back to the office."

Without another word to Bob, the slickest firm of brokers on Wall Street withdrew with as much dignity as they could muster.

Bob then closed the door and told Flint how and why he had put up the job on Littleby & Mallison.

"They swindled a widow lady who sent them ten shares of D. & G. to dispose of at the market, which was 72 at the time. They should have sold the stock and sent her the money, less their commission. Instead of that they persuaded her daughter to accept 1,000 shares of Solid Silver mining stock at 50 cents, which figure was a fictitious one, being obtained through some wash sales engineered with the help of a brokerage firm friendly to them. To the shares they added \$200 cash, making \$700, instead of \$720 she was really entitled to, and they had the nerve to deduct \$10 commission from the cash payment, just as if the transaction had been wholly honest. It was the cause of my quitting their employ. I said some pretty plains truths to Mr. Mallison about the matter, and he got his back up and bounced me. Well, I determined, if the opportunity ever presented itself, to get the lady's money back from this tricky firm. In my endeavor to do this I bought 25,000 shares of Solid Silver at 25 cents, day before yesterday. My idea was to corner the Eastern supply, and I succeeded without any trouble, as nobody wanted the stock, and were glad to get rid of it. I then got up this box of pretended specimens and had an account of it printed in the 'News' this morning in order to create the impression that a rich vein of gold had been discovered in the Solid Silver mine. It was rather a risky experiment, as it was natural to expect that the Curb would send out to Goldfield for a verification of the report. Quite a number of Curb traders came in this morning, looked the two decoy bags of real gold quartz over and were much impressed with the richness of the ore. They started off to buy Solid Silver stock right away on the chance that the facts were as alleged. Their efforts to get it sent the price up. This flurry wouldn't have lasted over an hour if the report of a gold discovery in the Solid Silver mine had been promptly denied. It seems that it wasn't denied for some reason which I cannot explain. On the contrary, a boom was started in the stock in Goldfield and on other Western Exchanges. That fact put my little fore business closed in Wall Street that day every trader

scheme through successfully. I sold the widow's thousand shares to a broker named Brown at 90 cents, and after the Curb Exchange closed Littleby came in here to investigate the specimens to see if they would account in any way for the boom. I then offered him my 25,000 shares of Solid Silver shares at \$1, and he snapped them up, expecting to sell them to-morrow at a considerable advance, for the mining market is now in a strong bullish mood over Solid Silver. Although I have personally made over \$18,000 profit on the deal, my purpose is not to let Littleby & Mallison realize a profit on those shares. I shall furnish the papers with an explanation of the boom, and to-morrow morning when the Curb Exchange opens for business I fancy Solid Silver will take a big slump. Nobody will be hurt except Littleby & Mallison, and the single broker who paid 90 cents for 1,000 shares, and he can't lose more than a few hundred dollars."

Flint chuckled at Bob's story and told him he was a clever boy.

"The reason I called here myself was to get a look at those specimens, for I meant to buy some Solid Silver myself to-morrow. Since you have put me wise to the scheme, why, of course, I won't buy any. I'm much obliged to you for the tip, and will do as much for you if the chance offers. Let me see those real specimens, please."

Bob showed him the contents of the two bags.

"By Jove! These are rich for fair. Where did you get

"At the assay office down the street."

"Well, you're a dandy, upon my word," laughed Flint. "And the other bags are full of coal, eh?"

"That's what they are," grinned Bob.

"I wouldn't be surprised but you'll make your mark some day as one of our shrewdest traders," said Flint. certainly trimmed those two brokers in great shape."

"That's what I set out to do, and I succeeded better than I expected. It's about time they got a good lesson."

"I agree with you, Carson; but to think they were done up by a boy, and their old messenger at that, is the best joke I've heard in a long time."

Flint laughed heartily, and after a few words more took his leave.

Next morning all the Wall Street dailies had an expose of the Solid Silver boom, and it created a whole lot of excitement and comment on the Street.

No names were mentioned, and consequently for a time the brokers were ignorant of the fact that the fiasco originated with the boy trader in Wall Street.

Of course, when the Curb Exchange opened for business, Solid Silver took a slump back to 25 cents, and nobody was looking for it even at that price, though it was booming on the Western markets at 85 cents and upward.

As soon as the expose was telegraphed to Goldfield the stock got a setback there, too, though a desperate effort was made by those interested in the stock to hold the

It tumbled on all the other exchanges as well, and was soon back at 35 cents.

The trimming of Littleby & Mallison by the boy broker was too good a story for Flint to keep to himself.

He let it out to one friend, and then another, and be-

in the financial district was chuckling over the doing up of the foxy firm by the boy trader who had lately been their messenger.

#### CHAPTER XV.

CONCLUSION.

The trimming of Littleby & Mallison at once gave Bob Carson a reputation in the Street.

Brokers who had hitherto been ignorant of his existence began calling on him at his little den in the Bassett Building in order to make his acquaintance, and to tell him what a smart young fellow they thought he was.

When he was pointed out on the street other traders went up to him and shook him by the hand, saying how glad they were to know him, and congratulated him on doing what nobody else had succeeded in bringing about—the humbling of Littleby & Mallison, who were cordially disliked by all the square brokers of Wall Street.

As for Littleby and Mallison themselves, they were so sore at Bob that they put their heads together and tried to think up some scheme to get back at him.

They were also out something like \$20,000 on the Solid Silver mining stock they bought from the boy with the expectation of realizing from 50 to 100 per cent. profit.

They knew that Bob had made what they had lost on the deal, and they figured up that altogether the boy must be worth quite a tidy little sum.

The second day after Bob had worked his Solid Silver scheme was Saturday, and Mrs. Manson and Ruby kept their promise to call at his office.

They walked in a few minutes before one, and Bob welcomed them like old friends.

After they had admired his little office Bob said:

"I've got rid of your stock, Mrs. Manson."

"Did you get Mr. Mallison to take it back?" she asked.

"No. I sold it to a broker on the outside after I had engineered a rise to 90 cents."

"Did you really sell it for as much as that?"

"I did. I am ready to give you the \$500 you were entitled to in the first place, and \$400 more, less my commission of \$12.50."

Ruby and her mother were very much surprised, not to say delighted, at the result of the young broker's effort in their behalf.

They said they couldn't thank him enough for his kindness.

"Don't mention it, Mrs. Manson, I was determined you should lose nothing through that unlucky deal with Littleby & Mallison. Now I will tell you how I not only sold your stock at a profit, but how I made over \$18,000 myself out of Solid Silver."

Whereupon he told them all about the scheme he had worked, and how he had caught the foxy brokers when they were not expecting to be done up by a boy.

Mother and daughter thought Bob the smartest boy they had ever heard of.

It was two o'clock when he took them to a nice restaurant on Beaver Street to lunch, and after the meal he escorted them home.

While he was alone a few minutes in the sitting-room broker, called on with Mrs. Manson he told her that he was very much at stock on hand.

tracted to Ruby, and asked her if she had any objection to his calling regularly on her daughter.

She had no objection whatever.

In fact, she was highly pleased to think that so desirable a young man wished to pay attention to Ruby.

Bob then asked the girl herself if he might call on her a couple of times a week, and take her out occasionally, and she said he could do so.

On the following Monday Bob discovered, through overhearing a couple of brokers talking the matter over, that a syndicate had been formed to boom S. & D. stock.

He immediately bought 5,000 shares of S. & D., which

was going then at 53.

For some days S. & D. showed little life, hovering around the price Bob paid for his block of shares, then it began to rise at a smart rate.

When it reached 60 it began to attract attention from the traders, and the newspapers commenced to print rumors about it.

The outside public now got interested in it, and the combine got its brokers to start the boom in earnest.

Inside of a week it was quoted at 75.

Then those on the inside began to unload quietly on the public.

As soon as Bob noticed that thousands of shares were changing hands he began to consider that it was high time for him to get out before anything happened.

So he gave the bank orders to sell his shares, and they went in lots of 1,000 shares at an average of 76 1-2.

He cleared a profit of \$115,000, which, added to his capital, made him worth about \$195,000.

"Anybody who says I'm not lucky in Wall Street doesn't know what he's talking about," thought Bob. "If I wasn't lucky I never could have made almost \$200,000 in a few months from a start of a little over \$500. Yes, I'm lucky, all right, and it's better to be born lucky than rich. I'll bet there are a lot of old graybeards who have spent most of their lives in the district wrestling with the Wall Street tiger who are not near so well off as I am. If my luck keeps on it will only be a question of time when I'll be able to call myself a millionaire."

It was about this time that Littleby & Mallison sent a fascinating lady to Bob with a hundred shares of M. & N. stock to sell for her.

Of course the boy trader didn't know that his late employers had sent the lady to him for the purpose of getting him into serious trouble.

The stock in question was the remains of a block which had been forged by a clever engraver who was spending a fourteen-year term in Sing Sing for the crime.

All but those 100 shares had been recovered by the company and destroyed.

They had never turned up because Littleby & Mallison had kept them hidden away in their office safe hoping the time might come when they could work them off safely.

The lady told Bob she had found them in an old trunk which had been much used by her late husband, who, she said, had been dead several years.

Bob believed her and said he would sell them for her.

An hour after she left a man, who said he was a Curb broker, called on Bob and asked him if he had any M. & N. stock on hand. Bob said he had 100 shares belonging to a client.

The broker said that 100 shares would do very nicely.

Bob got the stock out of his safe, and the man was writing his check for \$8,800 when Broker Flint came in to ask Bob to buy a few thousand shares of a certain mining stock for him, as he didn't want to be known in the transaction.

He saw the M. & N. certificate in Bob's hands, and ob-

serving the number, asked Bob where he got it.

Bob told him and said he was just about to sell the certificate to the broker who was in the room.

"I wouldn't, Bob, if I were you," said Flint.

"Why not?"

"Because you will be likely to get into trouble. That is a forged certificate, unless I am greatly mistaken."

"A forged certificate!" exclaimed the boy trader.

"I'd advise you to send it to the offices of the company, at No. 1 Broadway, and ask the secretary to let you know whether it is genuine or not. If it is all right the secretary will certify it. If it isn't he'll let you know fast enough."

"Here is your check for the stock," said the Curb broker

at that moment.

"I am sorry," said Bob, "but I will have to postpone the sale of this certificate for perhaps an hour, until I ascertain its genuineness beyond any doubt."

"What's the matter with it? Isn't it all right?"

"I have just learned from Mr. Flint that a number of forged certificates of M. & N. stock have found their way on the market. I don't say that this is one of them, but it is well to be on the sure side. It wouldn't do for me to sell you this certificate as a genuine one and have it subsequently discovered to be a forgery. It would hurt my reputation as a rising broker."

"Let me look at it."

Bob passed it over.

"I don't see any indication that it's a forgery. I'm willing to take it if you have no reason to believe it isn't genuine."

"No," replied Bob, "I won't part with it until the secretary of the company has certified its genuineness. Leave me your address and I'll bring the certificate to your office if it's all right."

The broker did so and then took his leave with an expression of disappointment on his face.

When he left Bob's office he went down the corridor and entered the offices of Littleby & Maltison.

Bob and Mr. Flint left the building shortly afterward, and the young broker went to the secretary's office of the M. & N. road at No. 1 Broadway.

"Will you examine that certificate and tell me if it's all right?" said Bob after being admitted to the secretary's

"How came this certificate in your possession, young man?" asked the officer sharply, after looking the certificate over

Bob explained how his lady customer had left it with him to be sold.

"Are you a broker?" asked the secretary suspiciously.

"Yes, sir. Here is my card."

"You are rather young for one. Well, this certificate is newsdealer, send the price not all right. It is a forged one. We have been on the look-out for it for two or three years. It is the only one which we have not been able to trace. I will retain it, and give you order by return mail.

you a receipt for it, which you can tender the lady when she comes back to your office. Was she an entire stranger to you?"

"Yes," replied Bob.

"Well, when she comes back to you for the money detain her in the office on some pretext and communicate with me by 'phone."

Bob promised to do that and took his leave.

On his way back he dropped in at the address given by the Curb broker who wanted to buy the certificate.

He failed to find his name on the directory in the building, and nobody connected with the place knew anything about the man.

Bob thought that was queer, and so he called on the big broker who had given him the information about the Solid Silver mine, and to whom he had afterward referred Mrs. Manson, but this gentleman, who was presumed to know all the Curb brokers, had no knowledge of this particular broker.

Bob then waited for the lady to turn up, but she never did, and he finally telephoned the secretary of the road to that effect.

"It was evidently a put-up job on you," replied that official. "The woman was acting for somebody else, and you were selected on account of your youth and apparent inexperience as the person most likely to dispose of the certificate."

That was the end of the incident, and Bob never learned that Littleby & Mallison had really been behind the scheme to try and get him into trouble out of revenge.

Bob continued to be lucky in Wall Street right along, and within a year was worth over half a million.

He then hired a suite of rooms in another building and looked out for regular customers.

During all this time he called regularly on Ruby Manson, and in the course of time became engaged to her.

By the time he reached his twenty-first birthday he was pretty well established as a rising young broker, and then he married Ruby and bought a handsome home in the Bronx, where he gave her mother a home with his wife and himself.

To this day Bob Carson is pointed out as a man who is lucky in Wall Street, but some of the old traders still remember him as the boy who trimmed the brokers.

#### THE END.

Read "IN A CLASS BY HIMSELF; OR, THE PLUCKY BOY WHO GOT TO THE TOP," which will be the next number (149) of "Fame and Fortune Weekly."

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### GOOD STORIES.

Without the aid of a glass, an Australian is said to have written 10,061 words on a postal card.

The floor area of St. Peter's, Rome, is 227,069 square feet, being the greatest of any cathedral in the world.

A city man had a friend from a Cork farm up on a business matter the other day, and they lunched together at a restaurant. The Cork man ate his meal entirely with his knife. When he was near the end he discovered that he had no fork. "Look here," he said to the city man, "that waiter didn't give me a fork." "Well, you don't need one," replied the city man seriously. "The deuce I don't!" came from the farmer. "What am I going to stir my coffee with?"

The jeweler made a small dot, like a period, on a piece of white paper with a lead pencil. Then he held a large diamond over the dot. "Now look through this," he said, taking up another stone. Through the second stone the dot was transformed to three dots. "There," the jeweler said, "is an easy way for the average man to tell a real diamond from an imitation. A dot on a piece of paper, looked at through a real diamond, is the same as before; but looked through a fake, it shows double or triple, or it appears blurred, scattered."

General Wheeler and a number of his colleagues in the service were once swapping war stories, when "Little Joe" was reminded of one that he heard not long before," says the "Indianapolis Star." A friend of a veteran of the Union forces once asked whether the latter, in his term of service in the Civil War, had ever killed a man. The old soldier hesitated a moment, and then said: "Well, I think that about the only one was a Confederate, at the first battle of Bull Run. You see, I was footing it in a startling way, and the reb chased me for something over a distance of ten miles; then he dropped dead from exhaustion."

The stoves of the middle ages, and of the era of the Roman Empire and throughout Germany and Scandinavia generally were built of brick, tiles, or similar material, and were so large as to be stationary, sometimes taking up the whole side of a room, and in the latter country in winter the couches and blankets were spread thereon and the family used them in lieu of the bedsteads of subsequent years. The fire was built at the bottom, and the heat and smoke passed through various flues, distributing warmth before they made their exit to the chimney. Some of them were faced with porcelain and were highly ornamental.

Probably the most novel theater in the world is that which thing? was recently opened at Thale, in Germany. The theater is on straight.

the summit of a mountain, and is surrounded on all sides by steep rocks; the seats for the audience are hewn out of the rock, and accommodate 1,000 persons, and the stage, which is also hewn out of the rock, is eighty feet long by five feet wide. No artificial scene is used, but the background is formed by the dense forest and by the outlines of the mountains in the distance. The dressing-room for the actors is close at hand in the forest, but completely hidden from the audience. The theater is fully protected from the wind, and its acoustic properties are so excellent that every word is heard.

Tokio has slums whose poverty reaches the last depth of human degradation. Below the cellars of Paris, the alleys of London, and the crowded slums of the New York East Side, the Japanese capital reveals a lower gulf, says a contributor in "The World's Work" of September. It is a region that no ray lights. Your moldy man of Paris and your "hooligan" of London do have at times fierce joys and moments of acid pleasure, but the microscopic intensity of the distress in the Shitaya quarter of Tokio bars out all hope. Tokio has far too many poor people, and their disposition is a pressing problem. Thousands are shipped to Corea and Formosa, but the pressure steadily increases, owing to the constant migration of ambitious Japanese from the provinces of the capital city. Japan carefully avoids all public reference to these great sores on its body politic. Their existence is hidden from the foreign visitor. Rarely does a tourist see the slums.

## JOKES AND JESTS.

He—What'll ye have, Mirandy? She—I reckon you'd better order, Jabez. I ain't much good at mental 'rithmetic.

Mrs. Dowager (dealer)—So you made it no trumps. Where are your diamonds? Mrs. Gaylife (dummy)—I'd hate to tell you.

"You let him hug you in the conservatory." "I did not. I made him remove his arm every time the music in the ball-room stopped."

Waiter (who has just served some soup)—Looks uncommonly like rain, sir. Diner—Yes, by Jove! and tastes like it, too! Bring me some thick soup.

"But why did you backslide?" "Because of the preacher." "How's that?" "He painted the pleasures of the world so beautifully that it made me homesick."

Stage Manager—The girl that takes the part of the sleeping beauty in the show can't go on to-night. Business Manager—Why not? Stage Manager—She ate a Welsh rarebit and she can't sleep.

"Confound it," cried the angry husband, "any old thing appeals to you if it's only cheap!" His bargain-hunting wife grimly smiled. "Don't forget," she sarcastically remarked, "that you yourself are one of my characteristic investments."

Cadley—How do you manage to quote your friends such low terms for coal? Lightum—It is this way. I knock off two shillings a ton because they are friends of mine, and then I knock off two hundredweight on each ton because I'm a friend of theirs.

Husband—I had a peculiar dream last night. Wife—What was it? Husband—I dreamed it was judgment day, and Gabriel had just blown his little horn. As I was assembling my bones you appeared before me. Wife—How strange! Did I say anything? Husband—Yes. You asked me if your head was on straight.

### THE SECRET MISSION

By John Sherman.

One night, as I was passing down the principal street of Santa Fe, listlessly idling away the time, and wishing for something to do, I was accosted by a heavily-cloaked individual, and abruptly asked if my name was not Adams.

At first I hesitated in replying, not at all fancying the fellow's manner, but on second thought I said it was, and in return asked why he wished to know.

"Follow me and you will know," was the somewhat startling proposition, for a man would be reckless indeed to obey such an injunction from every or any one he met on the streets of Santa Fe; but, prompted by a sudden impulse, I told him to lead off, looked carefully to my weapons, and fell in behind.

Half an hour's walk brought us in front of a long, low adobe house, with shuttered windows and massive door, upon which my conductor knocked, and we were instantly admitted.

From the street we stepped directly into a large, well-lighted room, in which were assembled some fifteen or twenty men, evidently of the better class of Mexicans.

I need not enter into any detail in regard to this part of my adventure. After assuring themselves that I was really the person they were in quest of, they at once entered upon the business in hand.

They were the leaders of a political faction, and wanted a man upon whom they could depend to go to New Orleans on a most delicate and highly important mission.

How they came to fix upon me I knew not, nor did I care. All I asked was that they should thoroughly inform me on every point of the matter, and then leave me to accept or decline, as I thought proper.

This they did, and after thinking upon it a few minutes I informed them that I was at their service.

When could I start, and did I need funds for the trip? Within an hour, and I did need money.

Let it suffice for me to say that the mission was a delicate one, and they kindly informed me there might be some danger attached thereto. Spies, hired assassins, and the like, would be on my track.

I was furnished with all necessary documents, amounting but to little slips of paper, upon which were written some cabalistic words—so they proved—and the street and numbers of the only two houses it would be needful for me to visit in the transaction of my, or, rather, their affairs.

In due time I found myself comfortably quartered at the St. Charles, and early on the following morning I took a cab and drove to one of the designated places.

My reception, after the bankers had read the little slip of paper, was sufficient to show me that I was not mixed up in any second-rate affair, and that they evidently regarded me with a good deal of interest, aside from other feelings.

What puzzled them was my being an American and yet employed by that powerful clique, every member of which could be doomed by a single whisper into proper ears, if I chose but utter it.

That day they would not hear of business, but insisted on spending it in seeing the city and enjoying its pleasures.

But the day following their whole manner changed.

The other house was visited, a meeting held in a room carefully guarded from outside parties, and the business discussed and pushed to a completion with a rapidity that was almost marvelous.

The utmost precautions were taken to keep the affair a profound secret.

I was cautioned again and again to be more than careful and watchful, for were it to be even rumored that I was there upon such a mission, my life would be far more endangered than it ever had been among the savage tribes with whom I had so long mingled.

That was about the substance of their not altogether pleasant warning.

But secret as we had been, there were eyes upon us, and ears to hear us, that no one ever dreamed of. In a word, there must have been a traitor in the camp, though the fact was never ascertained.

Relieved of the affair—for now I had nothing more to do with it—I determined to spend a few days in the city before returning to Santa Fe.

I found the change of life exceedingly agreeable—at least, for a day or two—and with a chance acquaintance, picked up at the hotel, I did the city pretty thoroughly.

The next morning, the fifth of my sojourn, I had set for my departure, and so informed my friend.

"Well, then," he exclaimed, "there is yet one place you have not seen, and you must not leave the city without visiting it."

This wonderful place proved to be the celebrated McGrath faro rooms, and thither we went—not for the purpose of playing, but simply as lookers on.

It was indeed a remarkable scene—such a one as I had never before witnessed—and I soon found myself deeply interested in observing what was going on around.

During the evening I noticed that my companion appeared well known to many who were evidently habitues of the place, and this gave me some little matter for thought, as he had asserted that he was anything but an admirer of the life; in fact, rather strongly condemned it.

I also observed that glances, quick and stealthy, were exchanged between himself and several dark-complexioned individuals, and once—by means of a mirror—detected him in making a significant motion toward myself in looking at one of them.

Now this might be all imagination. So I thought; but my life on the border had given me a particularly wide awake habit, and I never permitted anything to pass unnoticed.

Once I was importuned to bet, but declining, was pressed no more.

As regards drinking it was different, and before I was aware of it I felt the fumes of the brandy mounting to my brain. Late in the night we prepared to leave. Again I caught those furtive glances, this time unmistakable in their character.

A parting drink must be taken, and we stepped to the magnificent sideboard upon which the liquors stood.

At that moment a man brushed past, slightly touching me with his elbow, and instantly began a profuse apology for his unintentional rudeness.

I turned, and saw that it was one of the dark-browed gentlemen, and after accepting the excuses again faced my friend, who had already poured out the liquors, and stood, glass in hand, waiting for me to drink.

I remember now that a faint suspicion of something wrong flashed across my mind—what, I know not; but, putting it aside, and seeing my glass ready, thinking I had poured it out before the little affair of the jolting took place, I clinked glasses and swallowed the liquor at a draught.

I recollect leaving the room and standing a moment on the banquette, but after that, save, perhaps, a faint, uncertain memory of getting, or being put, into a carriage, all was blank for I know not how long.

A racking pain in my head, an intense soreness in my limbs, and a difficulty of breathing, were the first sensations of returning consciousness.

It was pitch dark. I felt a chill air blowing upon my face, and heard a hollow murmuring—a subdued roar were perhaps a better expression—as though of water flowing rapidly against some obstacle.

Further, I was bound hand and foot, and gagged so securely as scarcely to permit of drawing my breath.

That it was not a dream I was only too fully aware, and then the occurrences of the last hours, whether few or many I knew not, flashed across my brain.

As though by intuition I saw through the whole plot.

The fancied friend, and his kind attentions, the days of pleasure seeking, the visit to the faro bank, the parting drink, the unintentional(?) rudeness of the dark-browed stranger—all formed one link with another until the chain was complete.

While my back was turned, in the act of receiving the man's excuses, my companion had drugged the liquor.

What a simpleton I had been not to have seen through it all! So I thought as I lay, bound and gagged, in that unknown place.

Presently a door opened, a faint gleam of light stole in, and immediately after three men, masked, entered, and without a word lifted me up and bore me from the place.

I gave no sign of consciousness, hoping to hear something of their intentions.

But they preserved a strict silence, and continued on until the open air was reached. Here I was instantly placed in a carriage, which drove off at a rapid rate.

The drive was a lengthy one, and when at length the vehicle stopped, and I was lifted out, I saw that we had either left the city, or else were in some one of the many large parks or gardens that reach down to the water's edge.

There were trees and thick shrubbery on every side, save that bounded by the dark, silently flowing river.

No time was lost here.

A low whistle brought a fourth person from somewhere. A hurried consultation ensued, and I was again lifted and borne forward, this time into a skiff that lay moored to the bank.

I saw the end now. I was to be tossed overboard and left to feed the catfish.

A hundred feet from the shore the boat suddenly stopped. I was lifted for the third time, or partially so, and deliberately rolled over into the water.

In such a condition, and under such circumstances, a man would naturally think there was no chance for him, and so I thought.

But there is always a chance, a hope, as long as the breath is actually in the body.

I have said they rolled me over the edge of the skiff, and in doing so one of the turns of the cord that bound my hands caught upon a rowlock, the full weight of my body was thrown upon it, it snapped like thread, and down I went.

They must have backed off the moment I disappeared, for when I came to the surface, which I did very quietly, the skiff was almost lost to sight in the darkness.

In an instant I had torn the gag from my mouth, and was, for the time, at least, saved.

Swimming slowly, and without noise, I struck out for a vessel, the dim outlines of which I could see, some distance below, and in ten minutes was clinging to the fore-chains.

Without difficulty I aroused the watchman, was hauled up on board, and immediately subjected to a series of questions that came tumbling out one over the other.

The following morning I returned to the city, sought out the gentlemen to whom I had borne the slips of paper, and informed them of the affair.

They merely looked wise, advised me not to pursue the matter, but to get back to my native(?) wilds, or some other place, just as soon as convenient.

I did so, and returned to Santa Fe, where I again met the secret conclave, and rendered an account of my stewardship.

So well pleased were they that they immediately offered me another commission, which, I need hardly say, I respectfully declined.

It has been said of Macaulay that not only did he retain in his prodigious memory all that he had ever learned, but that he had learned all manner of things no other scholar would have retained. Aside from his astonishingly comprehensive grasp of many branches of human knowledge, he was specially proud of the fact that he knew whole libraries by heart. It was his boast that, in the event of a wholesale destruction of certain classics, he would be able to supply the deficiency out of his memory. It was claimed among other things that he could recite "Paradise Lost" without a moment's pause for refreshing his recollection; and that to reel off all the plays of Shakespeare was only child's play to him. Another English scholar of astonishing erudition was Lyulph Stanley, of whom Lowell said, "He knows three times as many facts as any man whatever had any business to know." Stanley is said to have had only one rival, Palgrave, the compiler of "The Golden Treasury." "It's an even chance which will return alive," was said when Stanley and Palgrave went on a trip together. When they did come back, it is related, Palgrave was pale, emaciated, silent; but Stanley seemed unmoved and more all-knowing than ever. Another human encyclopedia was Buckle, author of "The History of Civilization." One night, it is said, he was laying down the law on sundry topics with a pomposity that caused the table to quake. At last he put forth some statement about the burning of a witch, setting the date about a century out of the way. Stanley, who was present, had borne some preceding inaccuracies very well, with only a shaking of the head and a reddening of the face. But at this juncture his self-control gave way, and he leaped to his feet. Extending his hand, he piped forth in a vigorous treble, "I beg your pardon, sir, but the last witch was burned at such and such a place, in such and such circumstances. And her name was so-and-so, and you will find all about it in a book to which I can easily refer you, and which you evidently don't know." And so torrents of imprisoned knowledge were poured on Buckle's head, until the historian of civilization sat wrathful, extinguished, mute. But in a little while he had his revenge. Some one had mentioned a new dictionary as a good one. "It is," said Buckle most solemnly, "one of the few dictionaries I have read through with pleasure."

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